PNP stops travels but 45 leaving tonight

By Jocelyn R. Uy, Nikko Dizon and Allison W. Lopez

WITH THE BREWING CONTROVERSY over the huge travel allowance of a Philippine National Police delegation that attended a conference in Russia, PNP Director General Jesus Verzosa has ordered the suspension of all foreign trips by police officials.

Per Verzosa's order, the suspension—which will allow for a review of all

PNP STOPS A10

BUSINESS / B1

RP posts highest balance of payments deficit in 4 years

METRO / A25

Daughter, 9, used as drugs courier, says ma

ACROSS / A17

'It may appear Gloria is behind Panlilio ouster'

McCain comes out swinging in last debate

WASHINGTON—THEY SAVED THE BEST for last.

Republican presidential nominee John McCain, his back against the wall, turned in his best debate performance Wednesday night in Hempstead, New York, keeping Barack Obama on the defensive.

Trying hard to find a lifeline, the feisty McCain challenged his Democratic rival at every turn over his truthfulness, associations and record.

But Obama was not knocked off his

MCCAIN A19

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
Friday, October 17, 2008 ★ Vol. 23 / No. 314 www.inquirer.net

Sys of SM now RP's richest family–Forbes

CHANGE OF FORTUNES Filipino tycoon Henry Sy (left) and Fernando Zobel de Ayala, chair of Ayala Land, attend the launch of an Ayala Land-run shopping mall in Manila.

ALEXEY

THE PHILIPPINES' BIGGEST MALL operator and his family have increased their wealth by $1.4 billion despite the global financial turmoil, making them the wealthiest Filipinos this year, Forbes Asia magazine said on Thursday.

Forbes said the 83-year-old Henry Sy and his family were worth $5.1 billion.

While their peers were hit by the global crisis, the Sys rose from No. 2 position last year to No. 1 this year on the back of their holding company SM Investments Corp., which has interests in a dozen companies, including the country's second largest bank, Banco de Oro Unibank.

The fortune Sy and his family made was the "biggest gain in absolute terms" of the country's richest 40 families, Forbes said in a statement.

Tobacco tycoon Lucio Tan and his family, who own the national carrier Philippine Airlines and have interests in beer brewing and mining, came in second with a net worth of $1.6 billion, although this is still

SYS OF SM! A20

World stocks in free fall

Investors cash out as fears of recession heighten

PICTURE OF DESPAIR Specialist Ned Zelles works on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange on Wednesday as the Dow Jones industrials go down 733 points to their second largest point loss ever.

AP

LONDON—RISING FEARS of global recession hammered world stocks on Thursday, with Japan suffering its worst loss in two decades and Europe extending its sharp fall for a second day running after a brutal sell-off on Wall Street.

Renewed panic gripped on trading floors across the globe, with Tokyo closing down more than 11 percent and European stock indices briefly shedding almost 6 percent in early deals.

Wall Street's major indices endured losses of between 7 and 9 percent after a dismal US retail sales report stoked fears that the credit crunch would push some of the world's biggest economies into deep downturns.

Heavy losses in the US, Asian and European stock markets overshadowed more action by governments to stop the world economy from grinding to a halt.

Japan's Prime Minister Taro Aso said Washington may need to push yet more cash into its banks to restore investor confidence, which was shattered by a crisis that began with a US housing market collapse and now threatens economies worldwide.

"The markets are selling off stocks because investors still think the steps by US authorities are not sufficient," Aso said.

As recession fears bludgeoned glob-

WORLD A22

HOT AGAIN A Chinese investor holds his head back as he looks at the share numbers on the board of a stock trading office in Beijing. Chinese stocks fell further on Thursday, dragged down by Wall Street's losses.

AP

GMA goofed: No $10B from WB

By Christian V. Esguerra

MALACAÑANG YESTERDAY admitted that President Macapagal-Arroyo made a mistake in announcing that the World Bank had committed to infuse $10 billion into her proposed regional bailout fund.

The mea culpa came after the World Bank denied committing to any such initiative to help member countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) cope with the global financial crisis.

Ms Arroyo claimed the agreement was reached in Washington in meetings with finance officials from the 10 member Asean and their partners from Japan, China and South Korea and multilateral lending institutions.

GMA GOOFED: A23

GMA on youth: It has something to do with genes

By Christian V. Esguerra

IF PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-Arroyo were at all bothered by the fourth impeachment complaint filed against her in as many years, it didn't show—at least during a dinner she hosted for some Southeast Asian dignitaries on Wednesday night.

GMA ON: A23

Peso, RP stocks down: 'Worst not over, it's just the start'

By Doris C. Dumlao and Elizabeth Sanchez-Lucson

THE PESO YESTERDAY WEAKened past 48 to the US dollar and the Philippine Stock Exchange index fell 5 percent amid growing fears of a global recession.

From Wednesday's closing rate of 47.61 against the dollar, the peso lost a hefty 49 centavos.

As US stocks posted a steep decline, panicky investors dumped stocks, bonds and currencies from emerging markets and shifted to US dollars when Asian markets opened.

"The worst is not yet over. Probably it's just the start," said Eddie Cutaneg, president of Lucky Securities Inc.

The peso closed at the day's low of 48.10 after opening at the day's high of 47.74 against the greenback.

It was the Philippine currency's weakest finish against the US dollar since ending at 48.17 on April 5 last year. The peso, which has fallen by 14 percent, is one of Asia's worst performing currencies this year.

"It's due to renewed risk aversion and the possible vulnerability of overseas Filipino remittances added to the uncertainty," said Jonathan Barzelan, chief

PESO A23

'I just tell her, mom's in heaven'

By Jeannette I. Andrade

CARLO Cruz and daughter Amber: She's a very girly-girl, like her mom.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

IN THE PAST YEAR, LIFE FOR HIM HAS BEEN a daily ordeal of "what if" and "what could have been."

"I cannot really say that I have moved on. Every night I regret what happened," said Carlo Cruz, whose wife Leslie died in the explosion last year at the Glorietta 2 mall in Makati City.

"I keep thinking that if that [explosion] had not happened, we would be in Canada now. Leslie would be cooking breakfast. We would be one happy family who spends weekends in the park."

But then reality hits him, said Cruz, 32. And the knowledge that he should move forward be-

QUEST A10

Luxury store sees brisk Christmas sales

By Thelma Sioson San Juan
Lifestyle Editor

"WE'RE VERY OPTIMISTIC ABOUT Christmas. It will be a happy Christmas somehow."

It was Zenaida Tanyon, the newly appointed president of Rustan's Commercial Corp. (RCC), talking about the holidays this year. One would think she was referring to another era, not to the here and now—a world sinking into recession, and a country still grappling with poverty.

But there she sat at the boardroom of Rustan's Makati, dining with media,

LUXURY A15

IT'S CHRISTMAS IN OCTOBER Despite the bad times, Rustan's reports brisk sales of Christmas items.

RAFI IMPAL

WEATHER FORECAST

Second FRONTPAGE

SIX DIGIT 6 1 6 2 3 2 — SUERTRES 2 9 1 6 — 4 1 3 — 2 9 3

KE3 28 12 5 30

SUPERLOTTO 6/49 18 24 25 33 48 49 P16,000,000.00

Most Pinoys favor RH bill – SWS

A MAJORITY OF FILIPINOS, regardless of religious affiliation, favor having family planning education in public schools and the passage of the controversial Reproductive Health Bill, a recent survey by the Social Weather Stations (SWS) found.

The Third Quarter Social Weather survey found that around three in every four (76 percent) adult Filipinos agreed to the statement, "There should be a law that requires government to teach family planning to the youth," while 71 percent favored the passage of the RH bill.

"Support for both family planning education and for the passage of the RH bill is very high among both Catholics and non-Catholics. Regularity of church-going and trust in the Catholic church have no effect on respondents' support for the RH bill," SWS said in a statement released yesterday.

SWS added that support for both family planning education and RH Bill was "very high among both men and women, whether single or married, in all areas of the country, and among all socio-economic classes."

The SWS survey described the RH bill as "a proposed bill in the House of Representatives that gives the government the duty to promote responsible parenthood through giving enough information to the people and having safe, legal, affordable and quality reproductive health care services for people who want it."

Overwhelming support

The survey found that nearly half of Filipinos (46 percent) were already aware of the RH Bill before the survey, while 24 percent learned about it in the course of the survey.

SWS noted an "overwhelming" support for the passage of the RH bill both among those previously aware of the bill (84 percent) and among those who only became aware of it because of the survey (59 percent).

Regardless of whether they knew of the bill before or learned of it during the interview, the survey asked all respondents if they favored it or not. Seventy-one percent were in favor, 21 percent were undecided while only 8 percent opposed it.

Majority of Filipinos across all areas and classes were in favor of the RH bill. Seventy-eight percent in Metro Manila, 73 percent in Mindanao, 69 percent in Balance Luzon, and 66 percent in the Visayas supported the bill, as did 77 percent in class ABC, and 70 percent each in both class D and E.

Catholics and non-Catholics alike supported the bill, with around seven in ten Catholics (71 percent) and non-Catholics (84 percent) favoring the passage of the bill.

While prior assessment of the RH bill is slightly higher among women (50 percent) than men (42 percent), support for it was equally high among both sexes (71 percent among women, 70 percent among men), regardless of marital status. *Kale Pedroso, Inquirer Research*

But GMA is set to veto measure

By Christian V. Esguerra and Dec. Cabacungan Jr.

[illegible] AS A ROMAN CATHOLIC influenced her policy decisions, President Macapagal-Arroyo virtually indicated that she was set to veto the controversial reproductive health bill currently under consideration at the House of Representatives.

"My faith has a very, very strong influence on me," she told delegates to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Leadership Forum in Malacañang on Wednesday night.

"There are many ways to skin a cat. Some ways are more Roman Catholic than other ways, so I use the Roman Catholic way each time."

Ms. Arroyo said her faith was manifested on the issues of population management. "I'm pro-life as far as population is concerned," she said. "I'm pushing for birth spacing, not birth control."

Ms. Arroyo, a mother of three children, assured the statement amid plenary deliberations on House Bill No. 3941, or the Reproductive Health bill, at the lower chamber.

THE PHILIPPINES IS AN ISLAND OF CALM

"...Yes, the Philippines is 'lucky' because they have made the NECESSARY ADJUSTMENTS and REFORMS when times were still good. So they are facing the GLOBAL market problems and economic slowdown from a considerably IMPROVED position, compared to what they were in 3-4 years ago..."

"... The Philippines is an 'ISLAND OF CALM' currently, while there is turmoil in the higher rated and previously stable countries such as Malaysia, Thailand, India, etc'..."

Agost Bernard
Associate Director
Standard and Poor's

Standard and Poor's (S&P) is the world's foremost provider of independent credit ratings, indices, risk evaluation, investment research and data.

THE PHILIPPINES IS NOT BADLY HIT BY THE FINANCIAL CRISIS

"Don't let the ongoing financial crisis push you into looking at the negative side.

... If I were to think that the situation is really bad, I would have withdrawn our expansion plans and missed the opportunities... The Philippines is not badly hit by the financial crisis in the United States like other countries... the country has a 'certain peculiarity' that other nations do not have."

Hans Sy
President
SM Prime Holdings Inc.
(SMPH)

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500,000 - 999,999	4.250%	5.000%	4.500%
1.0 MM - 4,999,999	5.000%	5.500%	5.000%
5.0 MM - 9,999,999	5.250%	6.250%	5.250%
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Negros farmers shave heads to protest eviction

By Margaux C. Ortiz

MANSILINGAN, NEGROS OCCIDENTAL—Farmers yesterday shaved their heads and vowed to stage a fast in protest of their eviction from the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) after they tried to seek an audience with its secretary.

The farmers said they were prevented from gathering in front of the office of Secretary Nasser Pangandaman and were injured as private security guards moved to disperse them.

"We were beaten, manhandled, and forcibly evicted from the fourth floor office of Secretary Pangandaman as we tried to seek an audience with him," Rolando Flores, chair of Villamil Cane-sotho Agrarian Reform Farmers' Association (VillaCARFA), said.

Flores and Alexander Hoyohoy, 41, Alexander Barraga, 36, Wilfredo Beltiol, 30, and Rodolfo Flores, 52, were hurt during the dispersal.

Time to go

Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel also condemned the dispersal. "It showed how pitifully shallow was the administrative capacity of Secretary Pangandaman to listen to the complaints of his countrymen," he said. "Maybe it's time for Secretary Pangandaman to go."

The senator had earlier called on the Senate to inquire into the DAR, which he said had practically stopped processing all pending land cases, was spending the P1.2-billion budget for land acquisition and distribution (LAD).

"We just wanted to ask Pangandaman why he cancelled the Oct. 16 installation of farmer-beneficiaries (FBs) in the former landholdings of ex-congressman Herminio Teves in Negros Oriental," Flores said.

Big disappointment

"We were excited about the installation, which was supposed to be on Saturday, because the Texases have been depriving us of our land for years now. But once again Secretary Pangandaman had thrown himself to be a big disappointment."

He said 119 FBs were supposed to be installed in the 219-hectare Teves property in Barangay Cansuche, Sta. Catalina, and 11 FBs in the 16-hectare property in Barangay Villamil, Siaton, Oriental on the 69th in Cansuche had been holding certificates of emancipation awarded P25,000 since 1997 while the FBs in Villamil had been CLOAs holders since 1999.

"Our CLOAs and our legitimate claim to the Teves property had been affirmed by the Supreme Court in 2004. Teves appealed the decision but the Court denied his appeal," Flores declared.

The farmers declared that they would hold an indefinite fasting starting today, which coincides with the celebration of World Food Day.

"We start our fast on World Food Day to emphasize a big irony—that while people are being told about the importance of having food on everyone's table, Pangandaman and the Texases are denying us of the opportunity to have food on our table," Flores said.

OFF WITH THEIR HAIR Farmers from Negros Oriental have their heads shaved in protest. BOBBY LLAMAS

Chiz wants deposit insurance doubled

By Michael Lim Ubac

SEN. FRANCIS "CHIZ" ESCUDERO yesterday filed a measure seeking to increase the maximum deposit insurance coverage per depositor and investor from the present P250,000 to P500,000.

He said the bill that doubling the amount of deposit insurance was needed "to bolster depositors at the household" amid fears of a global recession triggered by the US mortgage and real estate crisis.

Senate Bill No. 2674 will amend the charter of the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corporation (PDIC) so that it can cover 97.2 percent coverage of all deposit accounts compared with the present 91 percent coverage.

In doubling the maximum limitation for the deposit insurance, Escudero said the bill sought to strengthen the very foundation of the banking system and continue to boost confidence among investors and depositors in the country.

Escudero, chair of the Senate ways and means committee, said the bill would "provide the needed requirements to maintain and promote stability in the country's banking sector amid the current global economic meltdown."

"The current global financial crisis, now being dubbed as the great financial depression in modern times, if not even worse, requires appropriate measures and prompt consideration" Escudero said.

He noted that the government and banking sectors had consistently claimed that the Philippine banking system "is showing strength and stability in the face of the global financial crisis."

But the senator said there's still a need to ensure public trust and confidence in banking and investment if only to overcome the worst financial debacle in eight decades.

"This bill benefits not only individual depositors but the banking sector and officials as well. We might not need until the next decade any bailout packages in this measure, but this bill provides the needed requirement to maintain and promote stability in the banking sector," he said.

He noted that PDIC had expressed support for the doubling of the maximum insurance coverage.

Last week, many-owned PDIC expressed support for this proposed alongside other reforms to strengthen its capability as a co-regulator of the banking system.

Military option eyed vs kidnappers

ZAMBOANGA CITY —Military action is now being considered as an option to free two humanitarian aid workers Eid-napped in Basilan a month ago.

The other negotiators failed in their effort to have the victims, Mirella Menekesa and Sipacio-ano's Hajelin, released.

"We are going nowhere here. The kidnappers are just playing around with people' emotions and our time," Basilan Vice Governor Al Rashod Sakalahul, the official negotiator of the provincial crisis management committee, said in a phone interview with the reporters.

Hajelin, a program coordinator of the Naglilikab Pinoy-dorion Incorporated based in Basilan, and Mirella Menekesa, an expert on rehabilitation of war-torn areas in Mindanao, were kidnapped in Tipo-tipo town on Sept. 15.

Sakalahul acknowledged that he has become tired of the turn of events, with "loss of players around seeming endless."

"The kidnappers are becoming kidnap-ers—to the point of demanding ransom that is so high," he said.

The military option, the vice governor said, had been discussed with Jun Mendoza, the victim's brother who said he was not yet ready for it.

"He fears for his sister's life. We are all worried, and let us keep as that will go on, there's a chance that the kidnappers will learn their ... mistakes," Sakalahul said.

He added that if the victims' families opt not to resort to military solution, "we are not going to pointed it."

Magbibalik Foundation president Father Angel Calvo condemned receiving a call from Hajelin on Tuesday night, "pleading for help."

"She sounded so weak. The abductors insist on their monetary demands," Calvo said.

Sakalahul said the kidnappers have demanded P5 Million in exchange for Hajelin's freedom. —Julie S. Alipala, Inquirer Mindanao

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Gov't preparing for 50,000 jobless Pinoys

By TJ Burgonio

THE GOVERNMENT IS PREPARING A contingency plan for some 50,000 Filipinos who could be affected if the United States slides into a recession, President Macapagal-Arroyo said Wednesday night.

"The worst-case scenario if there is a recession is that 50,000 will have to come back. But that's the worst-case scenario," the President said at the opening dinner for the Asean 100 Leadership Forum gastronjoint in Makati.

In other remarks, the President clarified that the government wasn't predicting that 50,000 Filipinos could lose their jobs in case of a US recession, but was preparing a contingency plan based on this figure.

"That 50,000 number is not an estimate of people coming home. That's a result of what I said is a contingency plan we must make in case there is a recession in the US," she said.

Hispanics

The Department of Labor and Employment had been reassured as saying that 50,000 could lose their jobs in case of a US recession, she said.

The President, however, said that the US posted a higher growth in the second quarter than the first quarter, and that it was not premature to say it would slide into recession.

"It takes two quarters of negative growth to make a recession and that has not happened at all in the US," she said. "So it is now, they (overseas workers) are not coming back."

Ms Arroyo announced Wednesday that part of the contingency plan was the setting up of a livelihood fund that could be accessed by overseas workers displaced by the global financial turmoil.

She did not mention a specific figure, saying the details would be fleshed out by labor officials.

Labor groups had warned that a global economic slowdown would take a heavy toll on Filipinos working overseas, and drive down remittances that had kept the economy afloat for several years.

Overseas workers sent more $14.4 billion last year which accounted for nearly a tenth of the country's gross domestic product.

Trade Secretary Peter Favila on Thursday cautioned that the government's contingency plan was pegged on the figure of 50,000.

"I know that there are 3.5 million overseas workers, if 50,000 come home, can we absorb them? That's the essence of the statement. It's not saying the 50,000 will lose their jobs," he said.

Favila said that the government would handle a scenario where 50,000 Filipinos would lose their jobs.

"According to Labor Secretary Blancamitas (Jopie), it's manageable. We're not saying that's what's going to happen. We're doing impact assessment almost on a daily basis," he told reporters.

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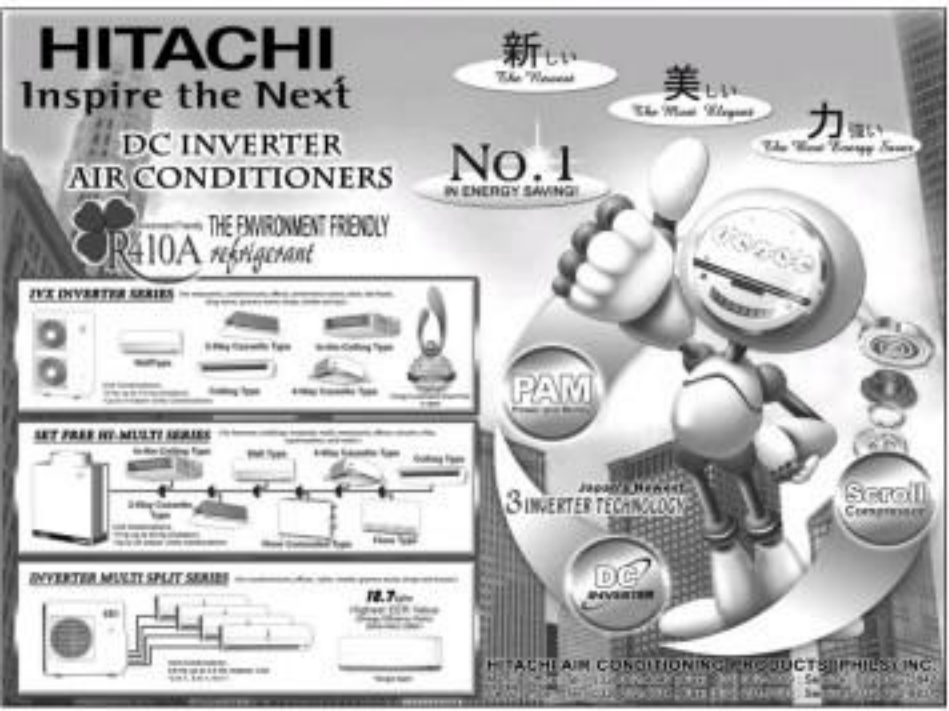
Item	Particulars	Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC)
1 year	Security Personnel for INEC Substations	P 972,216.00
1 year	Utility Personnel for the INEC main office	P 240,210.00

Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee



UNDERWEAR PROTEST

Women workers of Triumph International, the country's largest undergarments manufacturer, tore bras and panties in the air during an "underwear protest" Wednesday at the company's warehouse in Makati. Workers walked out of the factory following a deadlock in the collective bargaining for better wages and benefits.

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HBW 2000 BALLPEN

SC affirms P1-B tax refund of Fortune Tobacco

By Dona Pazzibugan

THE SUPREME COURT HAS AFFIRMED with finality its order on the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) to refund Fortune Tobacco Corp., the country's biggest cigarette firm, more than P1 billion in taxes it had erroneously collected.

In a resolution dated Sept. 15 but released only yesterday, the Supreme Court's Second Division denied the motion for reconsideration filed by the Office of the Solicitor General on behalf of the BIR.

The high court said it had considered all the "latest issues" and found "no substantial argument" to reverse its previous ruling handed down last July 21.

In that order, the Supreme Court affirmed the rulings made by two lower courts, the Court of Tax Appeals and the Court of Appeals, granting the Cagle Tan-owned firm's P1 billion tax refund representing overpaid excise taxes for the years 2001 and 2002.

The Court of Appeals earlier upheld Fortune Tobacco's claims for P680 million and P320 million in tax refunds for the overpayments it made with the issuance of Revenue Regulations 17-99.

The appellate court had also upheld the Court of Tax Appeals' nullification of Revenue Regulation 17-99.

The high court said Revenue Regulation 17-99 issued by the Ramos administration which increased the tax rates on cigarettes was not supported by the Tax Code.

"Indeed the taxpayer expects fair dealing from the government, and the latter has the duty to refund millions any unreasonable delay since it has erroneously collected," said the court.

"If the State expects its taxpayers to observe fairness and honesty in paying their taxes, it must hold itself against the same standard in refunding excess (or erroneous) payments of such taxes. It should not unjustly enrich itself at the expense of taxpayers," it added.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Friday, October 17, 2008
28th Week in Ordinary Time
Ignatius of Antioch

1st Reading: Eph 1:11-14
Gospel: Lk 12:1-7

Such a numerous crowd had gathered that they crushed one another. Then Jesus spoke to his disciples in the way,

"Beware of the yeast of the Pharisees which is hypocrisy. There is nothing concealed that will not be uncovered, or hidden that will not be made known. Whatever you have said in the darkness will be heard in daylight, and what you have whispered in hidden places, will be proclaimed from the housetops.

"I tell you, my friends, do not fear those who can kill the body and after that can do no more. But I will tell you whom to fear: fear Him Who, after killing you, is able to throw you into hell. Yes, I tell you, fear Him! Don't you get five sparrows for two pennies? Yet not one of them has been forgotten by God. Even the hairs of your head have been numbered. So do not fear; you are not worth more than a flock of sparrows!"

Commentary

The Lord challenges us to be much bolder than even ourselves consider offering for his cause or to the good life, a life of holiness and love. We (the Lord does not simply invite us to such a life, He draws us to Himself by removing all obstacles that can stand in the way of our friendship. He pays the price to redeem us from our sin, considering us worth more than all the riches in the world could ever offer.

May we never forget the sufferings that the Lord endured that we might have life to the full.

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Stay clear of pirates, shipping firms urged

VICE-PRESIDENT NOLI DE Castro yesterday reaffirmed the banning of a Filipino-manned ship off Somalia and appealed to shipping companies to sail outside areas patrolled by a multinational coalition.

"We are still awaiting further developments on the latest Somali piracy case," De Castro said in a statement that named the seized vessel as the Alicante Sandesberg, which has a crew of 23 Filipinos.

The Malaysia-based watchdog International Maritime Bureau reported on Wednesday that the bulk carrier was boarded by armed men in the Gulf of Aden while en route to Asia from the Middle East.

"I want to reiterate our appeal to the international shipping companies to take extra precautionary measures and to strictly follow the directive to limit voyages to the 'safe zone' or the Maritime Security Patrol Area," De Castro said.

"Multinational naval forces of US, Britain, and France among others, are patrolling and giving assistance to vessels" sailing this corridor, he added.

He said Filipinos sailing off Somalia are receiving "double hazard pay" and "are given the option to disembark from the ship should they decide not to continue with the voyage because of the risks involved."

73 ships since January

According to the Malaysia-based watchdog, 73 ships have been attacked off Somalia since January; 11 of which are still being held for ransoms. Pirates are holding more than 200 crew members.

The Philippines said on Wednesday it supported the reestablishment of a coalition of naval forces off Somalia to prevent the hijacking of foreign vessels, many of which have Filipino crews.

The Philippines supplies a third of the world's shipping manpower, with over 270,000 people working on ships that ply major seaways.

The 56-year Sandesberg, often advertised, Japanese-operated and Filipino-manned bulk carrier, flying a Bahamian flag, was hijacked off the coast of Somalia.

Foreign Undersecretary for Migrant Workers Affairs Esteban Conejos Jr. said the latest incident increased to 66 the total number of Filipino seamen on four ships being held by pirates.

"The DFA has instructed the embassies in Seoul, Tokyo, and Nairobi to coordinate with the shipowners and operators and with International Maritime Authorities on efforts to secure the early and safe release of the crew members," he said.

Conejos said the DFA had already contacted the concerned manning agency in the Philippines and was awaiting further developments on the latest Somali piracy case.

'Safe zones'

De Castro, who is presidential adviser on Overseas Filipino Workers, reiterated his appeal to the international shipping companies to take extra precautionary measures and to strictly follow the directive to limit voyages to the "safe zone" or the Maritime Security Patrol Area (MSPA).

He said that the coalition Navies, consisting of multinational naval forces of US, Britain, France among others, are patrolling and giving assistance to vessels passing the MSPA.

Somalia has been without a central government since 1991 and does not have the capacity to control piracy or patrol its coastline.

Online world news reports on piracy in Somalia said that M/V African Sandesberg was sailing from the Middle East to Asia when it was seized.

Powerful, sophisticated

Other reports, quoting UK naval intelligence data, identified the Somali Marines as the most powerful and sophisticated of the pirate groups in Somalia because it has a military structure.

Armed with automatic weapons and rocket-propelled grenades, the group has a fleet of mother ships, speedboats and a band of financial operations, the reports said.

The Somali Marines are said to be loyal to regional warlord Abdi Mohamed Siyaylie.

They were responsible for the hostage saga where they held 30 hostages for four months until a sizeable ransom was paid—said to be more than $21 million—on Aug. 6, when the hostages were released.

The three other pirate groups are the National Volunteer Coast Guard, Marka group and Puntland Group, all operating off hotspots Eyl, Hobyo and Harardhere.

They have a fleet of speedboats that take off from harmless looking trawlers before raiding unsuspecting ships. They are also armed with rocket launchers, grenade launchers, GPS and have sound knowledge of shipping lanes and routes. AFP, with reports by Cynthia D. Balana

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UNION OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES OF THE PHILIPPINES

NO TO IMPEACHMENT!

RESOLUTION 2008-11

REITERATING THE UNEQUIVOCAL AND CONTINUED SUPPORT OF THE UNION OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES OF THE PHILIPPINES FOR PRESIDENT ARROYO, URGING CONGRESS TO REJECT THE LATEST IMPEACHMENT MOVE AGAINST HER AND CALLING FOR NATIONAL UNITY IN LIGHT OF THE WORSENING GLOBAL FINANCIAL CRISIS

Whereas, the subprime mortgage crisis in the United States has touched off a slow-motion crash of financial systems in the world's richest economies that experts fear could lead to a global meltdown similar to – or even worse – than the Great Depression in the 1930s;

Whereas, the looming global uncertainties will require concerted action from all sectors to save international financial systems and institutions from collapse and cushion the impact of the global crisis on the peoples of the world;

Whereas, despite the strong macroeconomic fundamentals of the Philippines arising from the structural reform program put in place by President Arroyo since 2001, the domestic economy would remain vulnerable to global financial shocks, as the ensuing economic slowdown could dampen demand for our exports, reduced investments from foreign business groups, and threaten the jobs of millions of migrant Filipinos working in now-hurting affluent economies;

Whereas, this global threat has prompted the country's elective officials of Local Government Units (LGUs) from governors to barangay executives to close ranks and call for a unified front by all sectors of society against this ominous global economic scourge;

Whereas, local executives belonging to the Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines (ULAP), the 1.7 million strong umbrella group of the country's LGU organization, have demonstrated their commitment to national unity at this point by upholding the results of the recently held election of ULAP's set of national officers;

Whereas, this unity move spells the unanimous support of all of the ULAP's member-organizations of the postings of Mayor Benjamin C. Abalos, Jr., of Mandaluyong City as its president, Governor Loreto S. Ocampos of Misamis Occidental as its Chairman, and of the rest of the elected ULAP officers – and the acceptance by these elected executives of the duties and responsibilities in this umbrella alliance of LGU organization;

Whereas, this unity move by ULAP is contingent on its reiteration of full support for President Arroyo and her medium-term development agenda, especially all this time when the world is heading for its worst economic crunch in decades;

Whereas, impeachment at this time would divert the country towards unnecessary exercise when the country needs to focus on curtailing the impact of the pending financial crisis;

Whereas, while we recognize their right, this political exercise at this point in time would only be destructive, divisive and counter-productive to our economy considering the present global financial crisis we are facing;

BE IT RESOLVED AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED THAT THE UNION OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES OF THE PHILIPPINES REITERATES ITS UNEQUIVOCAL AND CONTINUED SUPPORT FOR PRESIDENT ARROYO, URGE CONGRESS TO REJECT THE LATEST IMPEACHMENT MOVE AGAINST HER AND CALL FOR NATIONAL UNITY IN LIGHT OF THE WORSENING GLOBAL FINANCIAL CRISIS.

Done this 14th day of October 2008 during the ULAP Special Expanded National Executive Board Meeting held at the Sofitel Philippine Plaza Hotel, Manila, Philippines.

Certified true and correct:

COUN. FARAH G. DECANO
Secretary General

Attested by:

MAYOR BENJAMIN C. ABALOS, JR.
National President

GOV. LORETO LEO S. CAMPOS
National Chairman

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10

10

Luxury store sees brisk Christmas sales

From page A1

then leading them in a tour of the store that has been marked even for a tough Christmas atmosphere.

What she said wasn't mere wishful thinking. She was basing her forecast on solid business figures: Sales of the Eastwood high-end fashion store in the country's are up 11 percent in September-October compared to the same period last year.

And Tantoco believes sales could climb by go up in the run-up to Christmas shopping.

Tantoco's son, Antun Huang, the executive vice president of RCC subsidiary Specialty Inc. (SSI), the distributor of luxury brands in the country, has an explanation: "Given the bad world economy, the Filipinos, who used to crowd a lot, could be traveling less, and therefore, are doing their shopping locally."

Rhea Tan, for, however, Huang must have left this reason squirrel in a validation of RCC's business thrust — to focus on the high-end and even luxury brand market which, as a shoot

ZENNIA "Nedy" Tantoco (third from left) with sister Maritoa Valbuena (second from left) and the third generation of the retail clan from left...Paolo Lutanga, Michael Huang (kneel), Hindy Tantoco, Katrina Tantoco-Lutanga!...Antun Huang, Dino and Paolo Tantoco.

worldwide, isn't as vulnerable to the volatility of the global and local economy.

"Over the decades, we've always noted that the higher-priced items have been the ones that sold better and

...ick on Tuesday.

Sen. Biazo said the trip was "purely an official business in line with the invitation from the office of retired Gen. Hermilo Lacsina, sergeant at arms of the House of Representatives, to visit and participate in the inspection and observation tour of the facilities of Rohde and Schwarz, an electronics specialist company."

He said the invitation was routed through their PNP liaison officer General Avelino Razon.

Lacsina, who facilitated the trip, was also part of the group due to left for the 11 day trip.

Philippines Worldwide, consumers are going more and more for luxury or, at least, quality buys — a behavior that has been documented in the best-selling book "Trading Up."

Rustan's may have gone too lazy in recent years, but Tantoco is not leaving any stone unturned to woo consumers back into the store this Christmas.

With the theme "Come Home to Rustan's this Christmas," Tantoco has led the staff, starting with the third generation of her clan, in transforming the store into a cute Christmas village that's full of glitter, color, baroque figurines and images (think dashes and gingerbread houses) that capture a child's unspoiled Christmas. In fact, the window display theme will be a child in search of a perfect Christmas gift.

It's back to basics small — which is what Tantoco has learned from her mother, the retail matriarch Glory Tantoco who passed away in 1994.

This Christmas marks the return of Tantoco to the department store. In July, her father, Ambassador Buenaventura Tantoco, and six siblings vested her as the presidency of the department store.

It was 20 years ago when Tantoco was at the helm of the store. That was why when she resumed her post in July it was, she said, "like coming home."

To boost retail sales this Christmas and beyond, she will focus on improved merchandising, customer friendly policy, and exercise restraint though out the store, among other measures.

Over the decades, Tantoco noted, the Filipino shopper has become more up-to-date with trends, thanks to the Internet. She also expects an influx of balikbayans shoppers this Christmas.

"But that's I'm always optimistic, no matter the era," she said.

Her optimism may not be off the mark. As we toured the Christmas shop, walking past the Christmas table laden with china, glassware and Filipiniana craft, we overheard the staff announcing the good news: A shopper had just bought the entire long table, complete with its dinner and floral arrangements.

That was Christmas shopping—before Halloween.

PNP stops travels but 45 leaving tonight

From page A1

"policies, guidelines, procedures, rules and regulations governing travel abroad"—will be in effect until an investigation of the matter has been completed.

But already, there is an exception: A group of 45 senior police officers is leaving tonight for a scheduled seminar on law enforcement in Los Angeles with the US Federal Bureau of Investigation.

"They could not cancel the trip because they already paid for their tickets. They will be spending their own money for the trip," Bay Natalio of the PNP police information office told the reporters yesterday on the phone.

Natalio said the 45 officers would attend a briefing on customs, immigration and [illegible] procedure today at Camp Crame.

On Saturday at the Manila International Airport, customs inspectors stopped retired PNP director Alfonso de la Paz from boarding a plane for the Philippines after he was found carrying what was left of a "cash-grocery haul" of P8.35 million (205,000 euros).

The amount—which exceeded the customs limit for departing passengers—was purportedly intended to cover the official expenses of the PNP delegation to the 77th Interpol General Assembly in Saint Petersburg on Oct. 5-11.

De La Paz, the PNP comptroller, had been appointed chief procurement officer of the delegation.

Suspension coverage

The group included Veronica Carabuena, who represented her husband at the assembly's traditional parade.

No taxpayer money used in trip to Munich, says QC police exec

By Nancy Carvajal

QUEZON CITY, Philippines — No taxpayer money was used in the trip of top police officials to Munich, the officer in charge of the Quezon City Police District (QCPD) said yesterday.

"All travel-related expenses, to include international airfare, meals, and accommodations, were shouldered by Rohde and Schwarz company, and no [Philippine National Police] fund was involved except for ... government visas," Senior Supt. Elmer Jose Diego said in a statement.

Based on its website, Rohde and Schwarz is an independent group of companies specializing in electronics, and is a leading supplier of solutions in the fields of test and measurement, broadcasting, radiomonitoring and radio location as mission-critical radio communications.

Director Geary Barias, QCPD director Senior Supt. Magtanggol Gatdula, district operations chief Senior Supt. Federico Lacson, and District Mobile Force head Senior Supt. Levi Ilagan left for Munich on Tuesday.

Sen. Biazo said the trip was "purely an official business in line with the invitation from the office of retired Gen. Hermilo Lacsina, sergeant at arms of the House of Representatives, to visit and participate in the inspection and observation tour of the facilities of Rohde and Schwarz, an electronics specialist company."

He said the invitation was routed through their PNP liaison officer General Avelino Razon.

Lacsina, who facilitated the trip, was also part of the group due to left for the 11 day trip.

According to Chief Supt. Nestor Bartolome, the PNP spokesperson, the focus on the trip was about the "proper handling, unruly events, speaking engagements by invitation and international conferences such as the Interpol General Assembly.

"Travel applications that have been previously approved will also be suspended pending the review of the different provinces," Bartolome told reporters in a press briefing yesterday at Camp Crame.

He said a special review committee would be formed to look into the procedures governing PNP personnel sent abroad to attend conferences and meetings.

Bartolome said the PNP was also considering a mandatory predeparture briefing for all police personnel sent on official missions overseas.

He said this would "familiarize them with international immigration, customs and travel procedures, as well as policies and procedures peculiar to the country of destination."

Proper liquidation required

Customs authorities in Moscow were to have received yesterday the documents sent by the PNP through official diplomatic channels, proving that the money De la Paz was carrying had come some from legitimate sources, according to Bartolome.

"The forwarded documents, translated into the Russian language, include a certification of official issuance of the travel funds by the PNP," he said.

Bartolome said De la Paz would have to return all "unused funds" and "properly liquidate" the disbursement expenses in accordance with government accounting and auditing procedures.

He defended De la Paz for bringing a huge amount of money, saying it was for "unplanned" expenses and activities and in cases of emergencies.

He increased the amount cabinet police officer get sick and had to be sent to hospital while on an official trip abroad: "Since he did not have any contingency fund, he used his personal money to pay for his bill, which turned out to be expensive."

'Big' conference

Bartolome also said cash disbursed to police officials depended on the activity or conference they were attending.

"In this case, the conference [in Moscow] was big... it was attended by over 1,000 delegates from 156 Interpol-member countries," he told the Inquirer on the phone.

He added that the PNP was open to any official investigation, to show that "we are transparent to all our dealings here."

A breakdown of expenses prepared by Supt. Elmer Jose Diego ... a copy of which was presented yesterday—showed that each police official was allotted P139,620 for economy class round-trip tickets, P1,500 for per-diem allowance, P120,892 for six-day allowances, and P13,500 for visa and insurance applications.

Reinholds attended the six-day conference along with Deputy Director General Emmanuel Gelia, Deputy Director General Rodolfo Balmores, Director Jaime Caringal, Director Isa Dina Bernardo-Acorda, Director for Operations Glenda Hardin Jr. and Director for Human Resource and Doctrine Development Cristian Datu.

Retirement guideline

De la Paz actually retired on Oct. 8.

As it happens, the Commission on Audit (COA) prohibits government employees from traveling one year before their retirement but has provided an exception, according to Director Abel Rosquillo, head of the legal affairs office of the Civil Service Commission.

"Retiring government employees are no longer allowed to travel except if the travel is connected to an official commitment of the agency," Rosquillo said in a phone interview. He declined to elaborate on the COA rule because he was attending a convention in Davao City and he did not have the pertinent documents with him.

Rosquillo said the COA had a "liberalized travel" and has approved guidelines as part of its mandate to audit government revenues and expenditures of government resources.

The COA, a constitutional office, says in its website that it is granted powers "to prescribe accounting and auditing rules."

It has yet to issue a statement on the P8.35-million cash advance for contingency funds brought by De la Paz to Moscow.

According to a COA circular, government employees are required to liquidate cash advances for their travels abroad within 10 days after their return to the Philippines.

The COA said in its 2007 audit report that the PNP headquarters had a total of P12 million in unliquidated cash advances recommended since 2002.

Of this figure, P6.1 million constituted travel expenses.

Still on duty

To explain why De la Paz was part of the delegation as the Interpol General Assembly, the National Police Commission (Napolcom) yesterday presented a 2008 resolution revoking an earlier one wherein retiring personnel were placed on "off-duty" status three months before their retirement date.

Napolcom Executive Director Jesusa Luy, chair of Napolcom, said Resolution No. 2008-817 showed that De la Paz was still an official duty when he joined the delegation.

Sources said De la Paz was "not off-duty" listed on the resolution approved on Jan. 21 and signed by Napolcom chair and Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno.

"[The earlier resolution] was revoked because it was seen to disrupt continuity. At this point, there is no more [harassment] off-duty status for all retirees," Luy said. He said on the last day of his term, he [De la Paz] was officially part of the PNP and he was called upon to perform his duties," Luy said. Reinholds added that the PNP was open to any official investigation, to show that "we are transparent to all our dealings here."

'I just tell her, mom's in heaven'

From page A1

custom a creative mantle among by his commitment to raise their daughter Amber well.

Amber is now 3 years old, the father calls her "Little Angelina."

"She is very girly-girl, like her mom," Cruz said, combining with a relieved laugh that he had worried that the angle gave up a meeting with only four months.

With pictures of Leslie decking the family home in Quezon City, Amber has asked about her mother at least thrice, Cruz said. "I just tell her, 'Mom's in heaven. She's watching over us.'"

He said he and Amber used to visit Leslie's grave at the Loyola Memorial Parks in Marikina City every Christmas but that he had limited those visits to once or twice a month.

"I want Amber to realize on her own that her mom's around and what's in her grave are just [the physical remains]. Although, when I go there, I still talk to Leslie," he said.

"I'm still trying to have faith that Leslie is happy where she is."

'Cherish each moment'

Days after Oct. 19, 2007, Cruz wrote a widely read e-mail about what transpired between police and the tragedy that took Leslie's life.

He wrote how he organized having parking where he did, not having arranged to meet with Leslie inside, and not having "braved the door" to go in the explosion site.

He urged other couples to "cherish each moment that we spend with our loved ones."

Now, talking with the inquirer, Cruz said he still could not find sense in the tragedy. "I still wish that this thing hadn't happened."

He urged other couples to "cherish each moment that we spend with our loved ones."

Now, talking with the inquirer, Cruz said he still could not find sense in the tragedy. "I still wish that this thing hadn't happened."

He urged other couples to "cherish each moment that we spend with our loved ones."

CARLO Cruz fondly talks of his wife who died in the Glorietta 2 explosion on Oct. 19, 2007. "We would have been in Canada now," he said.

He urged other couples to "cherish each moment that we spend with our loved ones."

Now, talking with the inquirer, Cruz said he still could not find sense in the tragedy. "I still wish that this thing hadn't happened."

Businessman says DOJ chief prejudged him

By Dona Pazzibugan

A BUSINESSMAN IMPLICATED IN A bribery scandal at the Court of Appeals (CA) yesterday challenged the Department of Justice's authority to investigate him, claiming he had already been pre-judged by Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez.

The businessman, Ferdinand de Borja, did not appear before a high-level DOJ (Department of Justice) committee which opened the investigation yesterday, instead choosing to file a motion questioning the legal authority of the Justice undersecretaries to participate in a preliminary investigation.

The panel is composed of Justice Undersecretaries Ramon Paredes and Pilar Facundo Jr. and Chief State Prosecutor Jovencito Zuño.

Bribery scandal

The Supreme Court had ordered the DOJ to investigate De Borja for possible criminal liability, one of the steps it took regarding the bribery scandal surrounding the Member-Determined Service Incentive System (SDIS) case.

The high court had dismissed CA Associate Justice Vicente Roxas, suspended for two months Justice Jose Sabio, reprimanded Presiding Justice Conrado Vasquez and admonished Justice Myrna Dimaranan-Vidal for saying degrees of lapses in handling the Morales-Libih dispute over the lawyer's proxy votes.

Sabio had confessed that De Borja, allegedly acting on behalf of Morales, offered him P30 million to subdue himself from the CHED-Morales case. The ruling handed down by Roxas favored Morales.

Calling attention to the Revised Rules on Criminal Procedure (Rule 112 Section 2), De Borja said the investigation should be conducted by the Makati City Prosecutor's office since the alleged bribery took place in Makati City.

"If Justice undersecretary, in spite of his recused position in the SDIS, is now actually representing prosecution within the contemplation of law... which created the so-called National Prosecution Service under the DOJ," he said.

Suspicious motives

De Borja further claimed that his constitutional rights to appeal would be violated because the two undersecretaries would likely end up reviewing the case.

The businessman added he was suspicious of the DOJ's motives for creating a special investigating panel when the alleged offenses (bribery) "for all the hoopla surrounding its filing, is nonetheless a light offense cognizable by the inferior courts."

De Borja said he was "not unaware of the past media pronouncements made by the Secretary of Justice himself, which clearly and undeniably constitute a pre-judgment of putative guilt."

Lawyer Vicente Cloribel, who represented Court of Appeals Associate Justice Jose Sabio, said the motion filed by de Borja was simply a delaying tactic.

The panel gave Cloribel to 10 days to comment, and De Borja's camp five days after that to reply.

MIGRANT RIGHTS ADVOCATE

Eni Lestari, chairperson of the International Migrants Alliance (IMA), a coalition of 112 migrant grassroots organizations, is welcomed by party-list Rep. Luzviminda Ilagan upon arrival at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport. Lestari is the keynote speaker at the International Assembly of Migrants and Refugees to be held her Oct. 31-31.

CHEd hails rankings of 4 RP universities

By Kristine L. Alave

COMMISSION ON Higher Education (CHED) Chair Emmanuel Angeles yesterday congratulated the four universities which made it in the Top Three Higher Education Quacquarelli Symonds (THE-QS) World University Rankings 2008, saying the institutions should do better next year.

Angeles said he was happy that the three de Manila University (ADMU), University of the Philippines (UP), De La Salle University (DLSU) and the University of Sto. Tomas (UST) made it to the world's top 500 universities in the survey conducted by the Times Higher Education Quacquarelli Symonds.

"I congratulate them for their achievements," he said.

According to the survey released this week, Ateneo ranked 254th, leaping from its 408th and 500th position in the previous two years. Ateneo was sandwiched between London's School of Oriental and African Studies and the Universidad Autonoma de Madrid, Spain.

UP, the country's premier state university, was ranked 276th, up from its 356th place last year, getting a slot between two German universities, the University of Hamburg and Ulm University.

DLSU and UST, both Catholic and private universities, along with Ateneo, were ranked 451st and 474th, respectively in the past year, the two schools were out of the Top 500.

Angeles said that Philippine schools would get lower rankings if they chose to advertise in the THE-QS' publication. "I think if we can participate, the ranking would move forward," he said.

Angeles, who also chairs the UP Board of Regents, cited UP's second-place position behind the Ateneo was the first time that Ateneo was overtaken. UP in the rankings.

UP did not join the THE-QS 2008 survey nor did it respond to the 2007 survey, saying to an earlier report.

UP has questioned the validity of the 2008 rankings, saying the methodology was "problematic." The university said the THE-QS ranking has divulged whose and how it got its data.

Angeles said UP could have ranked higher, had it not been for its budget problems. He said the survey took note of the institution's budget, tuition, and the salaries it gave to its faculty and researchers.

"UP charges a small tuition, it has a smaller budget, and the salary scale of teachers is low," Angeles said.

Time that UP has a chance, the teachers will not be included in the salary standardization. Law. They can have better salaries and possibly in the next year, we will be doing better," he added.

"We are going to appeal to Congress to give UP a higher budget. We will work on it," he said.

The UP system, which has its flagship campus in Diliman, Quezon City is composed of seven constituent universities, with 12 campuses nationwide.

Mining firms told: Beef up your own security

By Amy R. Remo

THE PHILIPPINE GOVERNMENT HAS COMmitted to further strengthen security forces over so-called critical mining areas, as it urged companies to put up "civilian-auxiliary groups" to protect their mineral resources.

"The security of mining operations should be a common responsibility of mining firms, the government and local communities," said National Defense Secretary Gilberto C. Teodoro Jr. at the 5th Asia Pacific Mining Conference and 2nd Asean Ministerial Meeting on Minerals.

"We are thus enjoining all companies to take legitimate steps to protect their claims," Teodoro said.

On top of employing their own security forces for their respective mines, Teodoro said private mining companies should create civilian auxiliary groups by forging an agreement with the Philippine National Police.

Teodoro explained that the civilian auxiliary group will still be trained and supervised at all times by Philippine military forces. The CSG will be allowed to retain size, depending on the threat level encountered.

He likewise called on companies to not give in to extortion activities of lawless rebel groups.

"We call on all who are being extorted to stop paying. Every PHP in extortion money you pay has the potential of purchasing a bullet," he said.

While there are no reports from specific companies, Teodoro said that some rebel groups have skyrocketed as much as P10 million a month from mining firms.

Such incidents of attacks and extortion have not only caused a degree of concern, according to Teodoro, but have also dampened investor confidence.

"We have a clear mandate to support national development and economic activities ... [and] destroy armed threat groups wherever and most decisively within the bounds of the rule of law," he stressed.

For its part, the government is set to increase security force deployment in the Compostela Valley, where gold resources are estimated to be worth some P900 billion, according to Teodoro.

He explained that there is a need to augment security troops in certain mining areas due to the low ratio of soldiers to area, as well as the difficulty of the terrain. Some critical areas that the government will initially focus on would include Surigao, Agusan, Abra and Cordillera Area.

On top of such initiatives, the Armed Forces of the Philippines is likewise studying the creation of an investment defense force (IDF) to address security concerns on a wider scope, where mining activities are conducted, he said.

Environment Secretary Lito Atienza earlier said the DENR will be tasked to protect, among others, mining firms who had been under attack by rebel groups. This year alone, communists had attacked twice Atienza Phi's planned $5 billion Tampakan copper-gold mine in South Cotabato.

ASEAN AWARD: Councilor Miguel Cuaderno IV (right) and world renowned environmentalist lawyer Antonio Oposo present to Mayor Edward Hagedorn and the people of Puerto Princesa City the Asean award at the city's sports and cultural center during last Sunday's presentation. Cuaderno received the award in Hanoi in behalf of the city.

Puerto Princesa cited by Asean for environment sustainable dev't

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY HAS BEEN MOlisted to receive the Asean Environmentally Sustainable Cities Award, which are being given for the first time to give recognition to cities in the formulation of Southeast Asian Nations that have "taken exemplary measures to keep their cities clean, green and livable even as they continue to grow as centers of economic and industrial activity."

The awards were handed out last week in Hanoi, Vietnam.

This award for Puerto Princesa was received by Councilor Miguel Cuaderno IV, according to a press statement released by the city government. The city was mentioned by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Environmental Management Bureau in recognition of its role as the country's foremost champion of sustainable development.

Dr. Ravin Pitawan, Asean secretary general, said the awards were an initiative of the Asean environment ministers.

The other recipients of the awards are: Tembawang District in Brunei; Phnom Penh in Cambodia; Palembang in Indonesia; Luang Prabang District in Laos; South Boeing City Hall, Malaysia; Taunggyi City, Myanmar; South West Community Development Council, Singapore; Bangkok City in Thailand; and Ha Long City, Vietnam.

Compelling stories

Dr Pitawan said the award is significant because "each awardee city tells a compelling story of how it has placed environment and nature at the core of city planning, the challenges it faced, and its resolve to ensure the cities remain environmentally sustainable as it develops and modernizes. Their ability to successfully focus on the sustainability of their environment provides an experiential model that other cities can emulate," Dr. Pitawan said.

Pitawan explained that the rapid economic growth and the increase of population in cities in Asean pose serious pressure on the environment. Numerous studies across the region have reported the significant impact of degraded urban environment on human health. Addressing these challenges will not be an easy task. However, it is not impossible. There are already many best practices from cities in ASEAN which can be shared and learned.

In response to the Asean award, Puerto Princesa City Mayor Edward Hagedorn said: "We are happy and proud and grateful to have represented the Philippines in this very prestigious Asean awards for the region's most environmentally sustainable cities. This is a very meaningful award because it recognizes and validates the cornerstone of our long-avowed policy of sustainable development in lieu of the destructive boom-and-bust cycles of environmental exploitation characterized by the wanton abuse and destruction of land, air and water resources — the very sources of life as it from were infinite," Hagedorn said.

"We thank the DENR-EMB for acknowledging our people's efforts by nominating us to the Asean Environmentally Sustainable Cities (ESC) Award 2008," Hagedorn said.

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OPINION

Executive bull

EDITORIAL

APPARENTLY, EXECUTIVE SECRETARY EDUARDO Ermita thinks it is really possible to fool all the people all the time. After the Supreme Court ruled Tuesday that the controversial Memorandum of Agreement on ancestral domain was unconstitutional, Ermita signaled to reporters that it was really the government peace negotiators' fault.

Ermita, once a presidential adviser on the peace process himself, said the 8-7 decision was a reminder for future government negotiators to "follow the instructions of the President."

In other words, the MOA wasn't the President's doing.

Poor President Macapagal-Arroyo. If Ermita is to be believed, this soon detail-oriented chief executive was a victim of incompetent or dangerously ambitious appointees, who managed to put together an agreement on the highly contentious issue of ancestral domain with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, complete with a high-profile signing ceremony scheduled in Kuala Lumpur, with international diplomatic dignitaries in attendance, without the President's knowledge. Never mind the President's approval; Ermita's version of reality suggests that the President never even read the proposed MOA. (If she did, surely she would have noticed that her "instructions" were not being followed!)

Considering that the immediate result of the postponed signing involved the deaths of several people and the displacement of tens of thousands; considering that the subsequent decision of Malaysia not to sign the MOA in any form placed the future of peace talks with the MILF in jeopardy; considering that the cause of peace itself has been set back because of public horror over alleged disenfranchisement of the Republic; shouldn't we expect the President, not merely to fire the negotiators from government service, but to sue them for treason?

At the very least, shouldn't her peace adviser, retired Gen. Hermogenes Esperon, be removed from office? On the contrary, Ermita told reporters, Esperon continues to enjoy the "trust and confidence" of the President. "The presidential adviser on the peace process acts in good faith, and he always has in his mind the need to find a final solution to the conflict in the South."

Let's set aside the question of Ermita's role in the fiasco. (Doesn't this former general realize the ridiculous connotation of that chilling phrase, the "final solution"?) Let's zero in on the executive secretary's glib tongue. If Esperon continues to enjoy the President's full confidence, does this mean he didn't approve the MOA too? If he did, but acted "in good faith," does this mean he didn't understand the calamitous consequences of the agreement?

Enough. Ermita is fooling the air with bovine sodium. His brazen washing of the hands ploy is so mere fiction; it is in-real-and-not-fit.

Does Malacañang actually expect the public to believe that, on the fundamental succession of a Bangsamoro Juridical Entity government that had as "associative" relationship with the "central government," government peace negotiators led by another retired general, Rodolfo Garcia, proceeded without the President's express say-so?

Does Malacañang actually expect the public to believe that, on the essential point of defining an expanded territory for what would have been the replacement of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, government peace negotiators proposed an arrangement the President herself did not approve of?

Does Malacañang actually expect the public to believe that, on the extraordinary breakthrough that would have allowed the BJE to set up foreign missions and conduct diplomacy unilaterally, government peace negotiators pulled a fast one on the President?

What annoys someone, Ermita insults the Filipino people's intelligence by seeking to insulate the President from the consequences of her own decisions.

He may have forgotten that the President brought pressure on Congress to postpone the elections in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao last August. It was important for the peace process, Malacañang said then, to accommodate the MILF within the ARMM political process. (In other words, if some MILF leaders wish to run for office, we should let them...)

He may have forgotten, but we haven't. That last-minute full-court press by Malacañang to postpone the elections is proof that the President herself was quarterbacking the settlement.

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SC dissenters agreed MOA-AD is unconstitutional

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

I DIDN'T REALIZE THAT MRS. JORDIS MENDOZA is now up before the telephone? She became the other day to say that 10 former American ambassadors to the Philippines supported the Memorandum of Agreement on Ancestral Domain (MOA-AD) between the Philippine government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), which our Supreme Court declared unconstitutional.

So what? Even if a thousand US ambassadors sing hosannas to the MOA-AD, they cannot supersede the decision of our highest tribunal regarding the Constitution. Our Supreme Court upholds the sanctity of our Constitution; the US ambassadors uphold the selfish interests of the United States.

What's the matter with Jordan Senior? The image he has projected of himself is that he is a broad learner ("learning has been his profession"). He phoned message for the location, he said that the SC majority decision was by one vote, 8-7, implying that the voting was so narrow that it could have gotten either way. Again, so what? The number of votes doesn't matter—the majority decision is still the decision of the whole Court.

And did he bother to read the majority and dissenting opinions before he made his statements to newsmen? Obviously he did not. Because if he did he would have found out that even the dissenting justices found the MOA-AD unconstitutional. The only reason they dissented was that they believed the MOA-AD had become moot and academic because of the statement of the President that she would not sign it or any other agreement in the future. Therefore, they believed the matter was moot for the Court to settle down the MOA-AD.

That is the only difference between the majority and minority opinions. Both of them believed, and so declared, that it was unconstitutional.

The dissenting opinion of Justice Antonio's lengthy 45-page editorial only also had the same arguments against the MOA's content and lack of consultation. To quote from the majority decision written by Justice Conchita Carpio Morales: "The fatal process by which the MOA-AD was designed and crafted were contrary to and in excess of the legal authority and amounts to a whimsical, capricious, oppressive, arbitrary and despotic exercise."

And in the words of Justice Alicia Otilio-Santiago, the drowning justices did not necessarily find the MOA-AD constitutional, but only that it had become moot and academic because of the statements of the Executive Secretary more than it had already abandoned the MOA.

In her dissenting opinion, Justice Dante Tinga, joined by Justice Romeo Catrama, said: "To declare the case moot and academic is not to find the subject of the case constitutional." The bayanan editorial quoted from Tinga's internal memorandum submitted to the Court:

"There is the danger that if the petitions were dismissed for mootness without additional comment, it will be advanced by persons or interested as to make the argument that the infirmities of the MOA-AD provisions has been tacitly affirmed by the Court. Moreover, the unjustified dismissal of the petitions for mootness will not preclude the MILF from presenting the claim that the MOA has indeed already been signed and is therefore binding on the Philippine government. Those concerns would frustrate the avowed if rather expressed intent professed before an interviewed individual, that would look to the present ruling of the Court as the main authority on the status of the MOA-AD under Philippine internal law."

So all those people have to be thankful about not only is the decision but to the public in general. To sum up, the members of the Court recognized that the MOA-AD is unconstitutional.

* * *

What could have been in the minds of Hermogenes Esperon and the other members of the government peace panel? Why did they allow an agreement that is patently against the Constitution? Even a law student would see that. And why did they initial an agreement that was crafted and agreed upon without public consultation?

Poor they under instructions to come to an agreement no matter what? Did they have a deadline to have that agreement? Were they under pressure from outside forces (like Malaysia, the Organization of the Islamic Conference or the United States)? Were they forces employed by the MILF? Have they been bypassed to agree to every dictate of the other side? Or were they just outsmarted and outmaneuvered by the MILF negotiators?

Was it their intention to make the MOA-AD so close-knit (thus the layered and almost secret scheduling of the signing in Malaysia) to force the astonishment factor of the Constitution to conform with the provisions of the MOA? By forcing an amendment to the Charter, other unconstitutional would have been inserted, such as abolishing in a parliamentary system of government and allowing the President another term, or extending the terms of all incumbent officials.

But as Chief Justice Reynato Puno himself said in his concurring opinion, "No one can accuse her (sic) of a lack of vigilance to have the Constitution in advance and the privilege to note the violations later through an amendment of its provisions."

Esperon himself will justify their agreement. Esperon is a soldier, not a lawyer, and therefore it is understandable that he does not understand the Constitution or the fine points of the law. But they have the services of lawyers. What were they doing? Were they sleeping on the job, or were they were conspiring with other parties?

Sen. Star Recto called for the sacking of Esperon as chief government peace negotiator. I agree with him. He was a disgrace to the Philippine government. His continued stay can only mean that in agreeing to the MOA, he was only obeying orders.

The mysteries of US presidential politics

PASSION FOR REASON

Raul C. Pangalangan

GEORGE W. BUSH LOST EVERY PRESIDENTIAL debate with John Kerry, but won the presidency. One very soon Iraqi did not take part in any of the presidential debates of 1996, but soon an overwhelming majority of the public may not be so sophisticated as American publics, but perhaps our instincts are the same. We are both instinctively populist, easily taken in by the sympathetic smile and forgiving of what the candidate has said in the past. Public debates are less about winning arguments, and more about winning hearts and minds.

Consider for instance the public allure of Sarah Palin. She is a winner by the Pinoy rules of the game: a pretty face though with humor, modernism, yet a quick study and loyal to the basic (her anti-establishment rhetoric so intuitively tops at the American (and Filipino) climate for class and big government, yet her own prescription for the US economic crisis is, precisely, more government regulation of the markets. Investigations show that she allowed her husband to use her office to garner votes to promote an uncooperative police commissioner, but apparently she has the Hollywood cutout and can get away with the defense that it was unethical but not illegal. Nobody will call the name of a single newspaper that she read as of Supreme Court decisions (apart from Roe v. Wade) that she disagreed with, and those don't seem to matter but her charisma is all.

On the other hand, John McCain's record is not hero, a fighter pilot who was shot down in Vietnam, but born a contemporary of his campaign, and rightly so. Time would've been a more competent to Republican nominee. It didn't work for the he be awarded. Hell, many veterans John Barry who lost to the draft dodger Bush. He it seems is be working. Otherwise against Barack Obama, despite the fact that he is too young to have been part of their national agony over the Vietnam War.

In a Pinoy context, I suppose McCain would have been portrayed as "anak ng Diyos," presumed him to have protection of moral officers. In contrast to the soft touch Obama and Joseph Biden, achievers both who stepped by and made on their own. For some strange reason, Obama has been portrayed as elitist, and at one point had to remind his audience what it feels to be a black guy trying to get a cab at night in New York City. (Perhaps had Obama been more aggressive against McCain, he would have been labeled as "uppity," a put-down against well-educated blacks "who should know their place.") Obama has been criticized for running across as being "too professorial," where the public thirsts for blood. Perhaps he is just plain too cerebral for words.

Finally, if Pinoy politics has taken a leaf from US politics, one reason is the rise of the professional polling group, like Social Weather Stations. Our thirsty public content and tells us what we want to hear, and politicians oblige. We have rejected our local "pundit class" as mere partisan mouthpieces, and prefer the scientific numbers produced by the pollsters.

The similarities end there, however. There are arguments that would've surely worked with Filipinos, but somehow aren't taking off among Americans. Obama has reminded the public time and again that McCain is a hopeless case, the party of the incumbent George W. Bush, and time for night to explain the economic mess that Bush is leaving behind.

Not McCain says, "I'm not President Bush. If you wanted to campaign against Bush, you should have run four years ago." And Palin says, "There you go again, looking back to the past." McCain summarizes, "Change is coming."

Those arguments wouldn't have cut it in Manila. I have always thought that the structure of elections, with at least 200 years' experience in democratic politics, would understand that if you want change, you must replace the incumbent group with the opposing group, not just replace the old with themselves. Manila voters may be too smart, but they will rub the self-proclaimed intervention to show their institutional (with apologies to the original Binondo). We may not believe in party platforms, but we do expect party matters to defend one another.

Most American politicians have historically avoided "class warfare" and maintained the fiction of a free society of atomized individuals slugging it out mutually in a free market. In contrast, the rhetoric of "rich versus poor" is a mainstay of Pinoy politics, but we have not decided it as being "divisive." Perhaps we are already divided, and slogans couldn't have made. Or we suspect that rhetoric is just empty air to start with, and we know that the devil (as self-ably demands as those guys get) is always in the details, covert and under the table.

Perhaps the problem in Pinoy politics is a point of debate to much deeper. We never really take official discourse seriously. In other words, if we want the truth, we look beyond the big words, or better still, beyond words altogether. Before the presidential debates, he couldn't even bring himself to say "Obama." Perhaps we are already damned, and slogans couldn't have made. Or we suspect that rhetoric is just empty air to start with, and we know that the devil (as self-ably demands as those guys get) is always in the details, covert and under the table.

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If we are cynical about presidential debates, it is because our politicians prefer to compete quietly with God to win the event. Asia debate publicly to win the vote. We must elevate ourselves from appearance to image and learn on our own presidential debates in 2010.

* * *

Comments to pauljonpfr@yahoo@gmail.com

A stinging rebuff to the administration

ANALYSIS

Armando Doronila

THE SUPREME COURT DECLARED UNCONSTITUTIONAL Monday as illegal and unconstitutional the Memorandum of Agreement that sought the establishment of an expanded Bangsamoro homeland in Mindanao with an 8-7 vote, in one of its closest decisions during the Arroyo presidency. The tight vote did not mask the stinging rebuff administered by the Court to the administration despite the fact that most of its members have been appointed by President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Days before the promulgation of the decision, legal scholars buzzed with speculation that the Court might overturn the MOA itself from a ruling on the substantive aspects of the case. And the fact that the Court stamped those apprehensions to rest stood in prestige. It showed that in moments of grave national turmoil, as in the case of the toppled opposition vote in Honduras, the justices could transcend considerations of personal gain made to the appointing power. The decision was a startling display of independence. It declared the MOA, initialed by the government's peace panel and that of the separatist Moro Islamic Liberation Front, contrary to the law and the Constitution.

The decision rendered substantive issues moot, one relating to the manner in which the MOA was negotiated, and the other relating to its provisions. The issues were: (1) Did the government's peace panel violate constitutional and statutory provisions on public consultation and the right to information when they negotiated and initialed the MOA? (2) Do the contents of the MOA violate the Constitution and our laws?

Stating on the petition of officials of North Cotabato, Iligan City and Zamboanga City to drop the government panel from arguing the case supporting the agreement, the Court ruled in favor of the officials, in a decision penned by Justice Conchita Carpio Morales. It criticized the process that led to the drafting of agreement saying, "The last-minute manner by which the MOA-AD were designed and crafted is ofclandestine, sinister, oppressive, arbitrary and dictatorial."

The Court said: "The MOA-AD cannot be reconciled with the present Constitution and laws. Not only its specific provisions but the very concept underlying them, namely the associative relation between the Government and the Bangsamoro As stated herein." The Court has hard on this one, which could have led to the creation of national sovereignty. It said: "The concept presupposes that the associated entity is a state and implies that the state is set its way to independence." It pointed out that the provisions of the MOA "contain many basic associative relationship between the Bangsamoro entitled forms and the government "virtually guarantee that the necessary amendments to the Constitution and laws will eventually be put in place." It added: "Neither the peace panel nor the GRP itself is authorized to make such a guarantee, rightfully such as not would amount to militarizing a usurpation of the constituent powers vested only in Congress, a constitutional convention or the people themselves through the plebiscite process."

The Court said the MOA "contains many provisions which are consistent with the international legal concept of association, specifically the following: the GRP's capacity to enter economic and trade relations with foreign countries, the commitment of the Central Government to contain the RP's participation in the events in Aceh and the specialized GRP agencies."

These provisions of the MOA, said the Court, indicate, among other things, that the parties "intend to treat in the RP, the status of an association and not, or any rate, a mere closely approximating it."

The Court said: "The concept of association is not recognized under the present Constitution."

It also rejected the notion of the respondents (the head of the government negotiating panel) to dismiss the petition on the grounds that the Presidential statement that the government would no longer sign the agreement is 'voluntary' form. The Court said this point is immaterial since the case had become moot after the government's announcement of the dissolution of its peace panel. Through this tactic, the government tried to keep the Court from considering the case on the merits, by going ahead and telling on the merits, the Court said. "The present petition provides an exception to the moot and academic rule in view of the grave violations of the Constitution involved, the exceptional character of the situation and the paramount public interest, the need to formulate controlling principles to guide the bench, the bar and the public, and the fact that the case is capable of repetition and yet evading review."

Responding to the government's argument that the President had already disbanded the peace panel, the Court held that the "moot and academic" principle "is not a magical formula that automatically dictates courts from resolving a case. It said the petitions "are ripe for adjudication."

The Court further said that the failure of respondents to consult the local government units or communities affected constituted a departure by respondents from their mandate under Executive Order No. 3. Moreover, the respondents "extended their authority by the mere act of practicebreaking amendments to the Constitution."

The resolution of the Constitution by any branch of government at a proper matter for judicial review," the Court said.

Red tape

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

RED TAPE (NO. 1018) TO BIND OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS: In many European countries, but in no country is bureaucratic overhead so well-to-have come from Pope Celestine VIII's method of tying Pope Clement VII with more than 60 pertinent supporting documents to annul his marriage to Catherine of Aragon. The documents were properly bound with red tape. In its original sense then, red tape refers to excessive and complicated bureaucratic procedures, accompanied by voluminous documentation.

We Filipinos are all too familiar with red tape. Our forty-six years (since 1962) of living in government offices and filling up endless forms, usually produced in English, which the masses can barely comprehend.

For many Filipinos, the way to get around the red tape was, quite simply, not to bother with getting the documents. People were not willing to wait days, hours and their valuable time being registered. We still have drivers without licenses driving unregistered vehicles, and we have stores and businesses running without permits.

But it has become more difficult escaping these bureaucracies, with traffic rules itching to enter from drivers and owners of unregistered vehicles, and with more agencies requiring business establishments. And many Filipinos trying to work overseas have to get those NBI clearances and passports.

The battle with red tape continues, but hey there's support to be hope. Last June, President Macapagal-Arroyo signed RA 9485, or the Anti-Red Tape Law, which requires government agencies to remove applications for "red tape" reasons like permits and licenses within five and more than three months within 30 days. The agencies have to utilize applicants if their request has been approved or disapproved, and in the latter case, what they must do to the recommendations. The law also requires a Citizens' Charter stating citizens' rights in dealing with the bureaucracy.

We can be pessimistic and point to the many anti-red tape laws that have been set up, and the many instances where we had no queue for hours only to be sent to another line. But I'm actually hopeful because I've seen many agencies where the red tape has been overcome after drastic reforms.

Renewals

Renewals of licenses seem to have benefited most from reforms. I used to dread the renewal of my professional and driver's licenses but these days it's a breeze to have them renewed. For a driver's license, there are numerous LTO satellites even in Metro Manila, so that you can just get your license renewed within two hours, including a medical exam and drug test. It's so fast that I sometimes worry if they are really doing a thorough job screening the drivers.

Renewing professional licenses is a bit more difficult because there aren't that many Professional Regulatory Commission (PRC) offices. But the good news is that renewal is available if you have your old license (or at least the information needed) when you first get your license, the last time you renewed, etc.). They'll pick up the necessary documents and deliver your new one.

For renewal of passports, you now have three options. First, there's the regular renewal, which is at a two-day wait. And third, for brave souls, you try to do it on your own. Because the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) is shifting to machine-readable passports, they now require your personal appearance to sign the application and to get your thumbmarks. So worried, too, that even expedited applications will require two weeks to process, from the time of your personal appearance.

If you go through Manila or a travel agent, they will have you fill up the documents beforehand, and then call you after the documents have been sent to DFA. You report to designated areas in the DFA for the signature and thumbmarks.

Just this week, I got my passport in 20 minutes. Interesting way out, I noticed a huge auditorium filled with people. My travel agent explained that these were individual applicants, some of whom had gone as early as dawn to line up. The DFA has a quota for applications each day, so individual applicants have to get there early. Outside the DFA, there are also many "fixers" who, for a fee, will process your papers in a large sign that says, "We in Fixers." From among the individual applicants, offering "expedited" procedures, would those. They'll just prolong the procedure. Everything you need, from the application forms to photographers, who know what's required, are inside the DFA. Just be sure to bring your old passport.

The system outside the DFA reminded me that red tape is undeniable not just because of the way it wastes people's time but because it creates all kinds of orders for corruption, from small-time fixers to people in the bureaucracy itself. Sadly, it's again the poor and the less-educated who are more vulnerable. Intimidated by the bureaucracy, they are willing to pay fixers.

A round table

Sometimes, the agency may not be as tainted by corruption allegations but suffers from the red tape of other offices. Which takes me to the Social Security System. I thank Joel Palacios of the SSS whose letter to the inquirer published recently outlined the procedures, fairly free of red tape, for employers who want to pay their SSS premiums at home. Some household help and drivers, it can be done through banks or even the Internet. I will try the banks one of these days. But a reader from Dumaguete says he hasn't been able to access the website at all. Which is a technological problem, rather than one of red tape.

Those from the story of how a fairly efficient agency like the SSS might end up bedeviled by other red tape tragedies. I've mentioned in past columns how my parents' driver has been working for nearly 20 years without SSS and so I told him I'd take care of his SSS if he would just get a member. And there the nightmare began. His birth certificate had some inconsistencies in the spelling of his name, as mentioned. Two working days gone. Then it was his marriage certificate, which the SSS requires so his wife can be listed as a beneficiary. But he was told he had to get a Certificate of Current Entry because his name had been misspelled by the clerk.

I looked at the certificate and didn't know whether to laugh or cry. Julius was spelled "Julino," and I knew what had happened: Julius is Basque and pronounces his name "Julino" as the clerk, who filled out the marriage certificate, wrote down his name as pronounced and that was where the problem started. His birth certificate used to be "Julius."

I know this problem is all too common. Heaven knows how many people are meant to be named "Jose" ended up registered as "Josed."

With so many Filipinos who economize on vowels, we really should don't an anti-red tape campaign to make sure that when those mistakes are made, provisions for a DOE are made easier. Right now, you have to pay P1,000 and wait for the oath (2-3 days' wages for many workers.) and must there are specific forms to fill out, often out of a crowd. Now that's red tape, tedious and unjust.

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Public opinion and conscience

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

OPPONENTS OF THE REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH Bill, now being debated in Congress, have said that the bill violates "Filipino culture." Their argument prompts them: The Catholic Church opposes all forms of contraception and has banned family planning, and the majority of Filipinos are Catholic. Therefore, any legislation which would allow public funds to make all forms of contraception available to Filipinos is anti-Catholic and therefore Filipino.

The trouble with this line of thinking is that it assumes that all Catholic Filipinos follow the teachings of priests and bishops, and share their beliefs.

This just isn't so. The latest public opinion survey conducted by the Social Weather Stations proves this. It found that 70 percent of the adult Filipino respondents are in favor of the passage of the reproductive health bill, while 76 percent support the bill's provision requiring public schools to teach family planning education.

Also, 70 percent of respondents in the Visayas and Mindanao, where the Catholic Church is strongest, support government funding for a family planning program, and even the teaching of sex education in public schools.

This is the same message that men and women have been sending to pollsters and legislators year after year, a message that has been ignored, if not actively opposed, by the bishops and their flock. Year after year, they have voted for "leaders" who support family planning programs, and even the teaching of sex education in public schools.

The people have long spoken out. Why are we still debating the issue? Don't our leaders have to listen to people?

In RESPONSE, Lingayen-Archbishop Oscar V. Cruz has been quoted as saying that "morally, right or wrong, we are subject to ministerial approval." An official affiliated with the CBCP interviewed on TV, even questioned the SWS findings. "Who were interviewed? And what do those people know?" the cleric asked.

Apparently, the CBCP representative isn't aware that respondents in public opinion surveys are rights of representative sampling. Or perhaps he just wants to believe what he wants to believe.

Now that the SWS survey has debunked the equation of Catholics-Filipinos, at least where family planning is concerned, the bishops' opposition to the health are concerned, Archbishop Cruz asserts the "superiority" of morals over public opinion. But whose "morals" should lawmakers follow? The "morals" of a few celibate men in robes and their followers, or the "morals" of the majority of Filipino men and women in making decisions about their sexuality, their health, and their family life?

ABOUT the same time as the SWS survey results were released, 16 faculty members of the Ateneo de Manila University issued a position paper titled "Catholics Can Support the RH Bill in Good Conscience."

The signatories to the position paper were to make it clear that the views contained in the paper are their own personal views (albeit based on accepted studies) and do not reflect the views of other theme faculty members or of the university as well. The theme text in the Letter the Mystery in a Catholic educational institution run by the Jesuits.

"After examining the bill's provisions, the principles social realities, and informed by our Christian faith, we have reached the conclusion that our country urgently needs a comprehensive and integrated policy on reproductive health and population development, as provided by the RH bill," the faculty members wrote.

* * *

THE FACULTY members dispute the Catholic bishops' (and the Vatican's) insistence that natural family planning is the only acceptable method of family planning and that the government should confine itself to promoting and funding just this method.

"Although natural family planning (NFP), which the Catholic Church promotes, offers many benefits, it is important to realize that pursuing an NFP-only population policy will be a disservice. If not a grave injustice, to women who cannot or will not use NFP simply cannot work," the faculty members wrote.

"We are thinking of women who find it impossible to predict their infertile periods; or couples who are such either on an irregular basis; or women who are trapped in abusive relationships with men who demand sex anytime they want it. Why is it naively wrong for such women and couples—and even others not encompassed by the above situations—to use a modern artificial family planning method, such a method without the risks and the demerits of menstrual cycle and responsible parenthood?"

An interesting portion of the paper is the one the authors make for the primacy of conscience, and the respect that must be given to what the Catholic Church "in a well-informed conscience" observed when couples make decisions about their marriage and family. While respecting the conscientious of bishops and others who support NFP and believe it is the only acceptable method of family planning, the faculty said that "others in respect the sins in these CBCP pastoral matters of Filipinos women who, in their 'moral sincere love and conscience' or conscience, have decided that there and their family's interests would best be served by using a modern artificial method of contraception."

"It is not possible that these women and their spouses were obeying their well-informed and well-formed consciences when they used an artificial contraceptive?"

Aliases

LOOKING BACK

Anabeth A. Guanzon

"LIBRARIES" IS A WORD I NEVER IMAGINED would apply to me, until my students brought me to their library. Not that I haven't been to libraries. I had been doing for many years, to give what has since been known on campus as "The Great Anabeth Guanzo Slideshow." This was my introduction to Excel, made lively by my collection of photographs showing the development of the National Book Store. In the 32 years that I've been in the real years, 6 months, 10 days, 7 hours and 13 minutes, I had been using positives and a slide projector. I think for many of the students this was part of the experience. As I was setting up the equipment, one of the students, pointing at the projector asked, "Ma'am, ano po 'yan?" I had to explain that it was a "coming edge" two decades earlier. But in the age of PowerPoint and Keynote for the Mac, the "Great Anabeth Guanzo Slideshow" was quaint.

To compare pictures, I would sometimes run two numbers on two screens, and that used to be the highlight of the computer age, however, it was definitely antiquated.

So I stepped into the 21st century like everyone else, and the experience of the clicking sound and the weightless of the slide machine is no more.

Another thing my students find strange are research assignments that require a trip to the library. How can anything be so quaint when the library was renovated, and voices from the back of the room ask, "Aren't those material available on the Net?" When I explain that not all things are available online and that a trip to the library is part of university life, some are surprised to learn that "libraries in any province want to handle physical books?"

This diary entitled made me feel 200 years old. Looking back on my days in college, we did have to visit the library and go through those 3 x 5 cards in metal drawers called a "card catalogue." Today students can open the catalogue of all books in the main library in the computer online. To borrow a book, I had to write down call numbers and accession numbers in a library card, sign my name on it and another card found in a drawer on the back cover of the book. The end of the process was when the librarian stamped the due date on the book and the library card.

Today you can check out a book without a librarian. All you need to do is scan your university ID and barcodes on the books, just as a modern checks out groceries in a supermarket. I wonder what became of all those extra card catalogues. When I regret though was not collecting the cards with signatures in the backs of books. Dalton Reymont once told me that he borrowed from the Ateneo Rizal Library because I would actually find autographs of famous historians: Horacio de la Costa, Fernando Zobel, Jaime G. Fernandez, Rolando Tinio, Alfredo Navarro Salanga, Bienvenido Lumbera, etc. The University of the Philippines Main Library in Diliman would have been another source of famous autographs.

The Internet is really a wonderful research tool, and I cannot imagine schools this without it. But there is still a thrill to handling physical books, there is still excitement going through the stacks to find that one book that you need. I love to go to Rizal Library when I'm in the UP Main Library and I use that they still maintained a card catalogue in some forgotten corner of the reference section. One of these nostalgia, I learned there to handle old and grimy cards and was surprised that it was organized by author, with books arranged by author and subject. Then there was my divorce that had an alphabetical listing of pseudonyms. This was not on the Online Public Access Catalogue at OPAC. The pen names were not even written on cards but on slips of scratch paper. I spent an afternoon through those, and here are some of my findings.

I always knew Raul and Dimasalang (Rizal's Tagalog for bench) are not that he used Laong Laan (Ever prepared) and even Colambelo. But the real Rizal also used AGRO, Pantaleon Agoncillo and Antonio Ma. Regidor (Antonio Ma. raindrop Pena had many names: Blas na Taling, Anong, Isaniang, Faring Alba, Isang Dalita, Kalampay and Elanio Balitao. Antonio K. Abad was Idiota, Pedro de Gusmao de Anonrago was Cosme de Alibay, Luis Taruc used Alipato, which Amado Hernandez used in Mga Ibong Mandaragit. Gen Douglas was also called Alipato.

Another Hernandez was Bertie Known as Bhagsing-gal Ani, Marcelo Adriatico (1860-1919) the whom Adriatico street in Malate was named and the names Amanet, C. Amador and Felipe Makaya. Hugo Perez was Mallorca, Jose Palma (1876-1903), the poet who wrote the lyrics of our National Anthem, was also known as Sanza, Jose Bautista Emiliano, Gen Emilio Jacinto used Dimasalang, Pedro Serrano Laktaw, Ben Lopez E. Santos and Manuel H. Pefiblanco used Shadi Bayan. The former also used Doctor Lolay. Rizal's friend since Ateneo days Antonio Regidor used "Tapo ni Dimasalang" for his pen name.

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Gen Douglas was also called Alipato

Intriguing, pressing warning

I FIND THE SEPT. 16 COLUMN OF FORMER Chief Justice Artemio Panganiban instructive, enlightening and, in some measure, intriguing. What intrigued me, specifically, was the use of the word "packed" in describing the Supreme Court and the system implied and promised meaning. I could have easily dismissed it as a mere expression of someone's personal opinion. Which I did not, because it was said by somebody who is very credible and, in fact, knowledgeable of the Court's working environment, its unique role in the judicial system, and in our genius form of government.

For this reason, I took the word in question as a validation of my doubts in the integrity of the majority of the justices now sitting in the Supreme Court, which doubts I have harbored since the Court started making controversial decisions on some highly visible and publicized cases. I would assume my opinion of the present Court is shared by some people.

Still, I am hoping against all odds that I am dead wrong about my present view of the judicial system... as I believe that a biased judiciary would definitely render the process of check and balance ineffective and, thus, inevitably place everything, including you and me, at the disposal and mercy of the executive branch and its cohorts. That is, if my conclusions—different and unwelcome of the pressing and timely warning from the hired hatmen and justices. Be vigilant, and, act, accordingly, as concerned citizens of this country and lovers of Liberty.

—ARCYE SIMA,
abibalit@yahoo.com

LETTERS

SSS ID not necessary for pension application

THIS IS IN REFERENCE TO ABUNDAS DICEno's letter which was published in the Inquirer last Sept. 12.

Dicenso said he failed to get a Social Security System (SSS) identification card (ID) because the ID machine at our Biñan, Laguna branch was not working when he went there last Aug. 18. Because of this, he said, he was unable to apply for his retirement pension.

He said: "To a newly qualified pensioner like me who has long waited for my retirement age to come, this is very sad and frustrating experience. I am old and not exactly in the pink of health. I shudder to think that death might overcome me before I even get to enjoy the retirement benefits due me."

The lack of an SSS ID is not a hindrance in applying for pension. A member can present two valid IDs when he/she files for retirement benefits. If he/she has already applied for an SSS ID, he/she can show the acknowledgement stub and two valid IDs.

Our computer records show that Dicenso has a total of 167 contributions, which means he is not yet qualified for the 10-year pension. A member needs 120 contributions to qualify for a retirement pension.

We recommend that Dicenso continue paying his contributions as a voluntary member until he meets the required number of payments for lifetime retirement pension.

—JOEL P. VILLASIN,
assistant vice president,
Media Affairs, Social Security System

Recall move leader ticks off Panlilio's sins

RECALL EMPEY SEE FORMALS ELSEWHERE Gov. Eddie T. Panlilio ecumenist statehood ["He has big stake in Nonog Ed' recall move," letters, 9/26/08], may we ask him to ponder some of these questions for us, please?

Bah said Panlilio's victory was a testament to the Filipino people's thirst for good governance to triumph over the politics of guns, goons and gold. Oh, so did not Panlilio himself indulge in the politics of gold—leaving around a million of pesos in his campaign fund for himself his campaign? In fact, Panlilio's non-disclosure of much of the financial donations in the statement of campaign contributions and expenses he filed with the Comelec—particularly the millions he got from Lolita Ilustre—precisely gave room to the perjury case filed against him.

Aside from Ilustre's millions, contributions that were not accounted for included those of former Bataan Rep. Willy Villanueva and the Mabuti businessmen, as well as those from Kapampangans in the diaspora.

How is this for transparency and accountability that Bah trumpets at every mention of Panlilio's name?

In Panlilio has, in his first month in office, raised quarry collections to P1 million a day by more than 100 percent. Only now are pots of it? Barely half of that much needed beach mark of honesty and integrity.

Good governance? Tell that to the needy Kapampangans deprived of basic health services at the medicine chest said ill-equipped Aurora Hospitals still waiting for their share of the development funds.

Accountability? Tell that to the dominant quarrymen of the Bayan Lubagan as in Guba [Bataan] were well into their third month of protest at the Capitol composed for the high-handedness Panlilio displayed in effecting their dismissal. Yet, the same people Panlilio seems hell-bent on using as human fodder to the 1,000 per cent increase in quarry income are now calling for his ouster for "incompetence," among others.

Goodwill? So what can Bah say about Panlilio opposing the presidential board resolution declaring Aurora Park as "freedom park" and ordering the San Fernando City mayor to issue and desist from issuing permits to "anyone" who wants to use the park "for whatever purpose"?

And, while at it, Bah may as well justify to the Bataan bum Panlilio's order to the local police to disperse the rally, arrest the three if needed, and dismantle their picket line.

Bah says that the recall drive "will not only be a big blow to Pampanga but a backward step from every Filipino's dream to have government leaders who will truly and effectively serve our nation."

Sir, Mr. Bah, the recall drive will be a big blow only to some incompetent egos over-blown by the admixture of people blind, if not alien, to the realities obtaining in Pampanga today.

One Bah and four Kapa Kutis! members would not know any better than the more than 200,000 Kapampangan signatories to the recall petition.

—EDDYCE BUSING,
president,
Kapampangan Kutis! Mag-
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Economic solutions to barangay problem

I AM A RESIDENT OF TALON 5, LAS PIÑAS City. I am writing this letter for two reasons:

The first is to remind our punong barangay, Barangay Captain Atty. Ernesto Cuesta, that my two-year term and my concern over the state of peace and order in Las Piñas, particularly in Barangay Talon 5, in the morning of Sept. 3, 2008, burglars broke into our house and ran off with a number of small but valuable items (e.g., cellphones, wallets, backpacks).

All of the houses in our area have been burglarized. But despite the fact that police rounds passed our streets every midnight, or around that time. The most weird unfathomable, but the barangay blotters attest to this. A year ago, one of my neighbors wrote our congressman's endorsement this problem. To this day, the problem persists.

The second reason I am writing this letter is to suggest some viable and practical solutions to this problem. (I am not accusing the residents of depressed areas which have been a hotbed of crime.)

1. The mobile police patrol doesn't work. It has been covering our barangay for years. It would be better if the local government put up distinct barangay and police outposts, which should also be more economical. Poks. Villa Barangay, Sto. Niño and Ilo Ilo Cine Compound are the most congested areas of Barangay Talon 5. The high population density in these areas has caused a significant number of urban poor dwellers turn into social problems. Erecting outposts equipped with CCTVs or key entry and exit points would be the most efficient way of monitoring these areas/zones. This project can be integrated into the peace and order program of Las Piñas, thus making the city a model for the anti-crime and drug law enforcement technology.

2. At this time when the prices of prime consumer items are going up, a significant number of our municipal/city council members have left with no option but to move their needs through criminal means. It is time for our local government and law enforcers to address the economic situation of barangays in Talon 5. Politicians, private, local officials and law enforcement officers should come up with holistic and sustainable development projects for the barangay's marginalized sector.

I hope this will not fall on deaf ears.

—ERNEST VILLAVEN, Las Piñas City

Across the NATION

'It may appear Gloria is behind Panlilio ouster'

By Alexis Romero

GOVERNOR Pumbo gets in touch with his constituents.

COMMISSION on Elections Chair Jose Melo yesterday cautioned against getting funds for recall elections in Pampanga from the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) as this would link President Macapagal-Arroyo to the campaign to oust Catholic priest Eddie Panlilio as Pampanga governor.

Melo said drawing funds from the DBM might be questioned because the department is under the Office of the President.

"It may appear that the (DBM) was supporting the recall campaign" if funds were drawn from the DBM, said Melo in an interview in the City of San Fernando in Pampanga.

Melo said the city and 20 towns of Pampanga could instead help pool funds for the recall elections.

"They can possibly get that from their budget," Melo said. He reiterated that the Comelec has only P1 million for all recall cases in the country.

A big province such as Pampanga, he said, needs about P40 million for recall elections.

Another option, he said, is for the provincial board to offer a budget for Panlilio, he said, one-twelfth this.

"Of course, he (Panlilio) won't sit his neck," Melo said in Kapampangan.

Congress, on the other hand, cannot immediately give the Comelec additional funds because it is still on recess, he said.

Melo said he did not know if the law allows the Comelec to accept and spend private donations for recall elections.

The reactions of members of the Pampanga Mayors League to this option were not immediately known. Candaba Mayor Jerry Delayo, PML spokesperson, did not answer calls on Thursday.

Comelec Commissioner Rene Sarmiento also said the Comelec doesn't have money for recall elections in Pampanga and Iloilo.

But unlike Melo, he said the Comelec might ask the DBM for funds.

"The Comelec does not have any money for we will have to ask the Department of Budget and Management to release the funds," he said.

He said recall elections would require "a lot of money" but could not specify an amount.

Ferdinand Balisacan, Comelec legal division chief, said millions of pesos were needed to print ballots, produce ballot boxes and pay for salaries of election workers.

Should recall elections be held, Sarmiento said there was no time to nominate them.

Besides Pampanga and Iloilo, recall elections loom in other areas that Sarmiento could not list down.

"It's also a sword of Damocles hanging over the people in the areas where there are recall petitions," he said.

The PML, a group staunchly loyal to Ms Arroyo, did not hide its support for Bambol's campaign to gather signatures for the recall petitions. Majority of the mayors made final village officials for the signature drive.

Kamikhan province Baron Flemson said it was the duty of the Comelec to look for funds.

Panlilio's counsel, Romulo Macalintal, said Kamikhan and other recall proponents should not be talking in the first place of a recall election because their case has doubted.

"Legally, it won't succeed because of a pending protest," Macalintal said, referring to the recount case of losing gubernatorial candidate Lilia Pineda with the Comelec. The Supreme Court suspended it in February on the appeal of Panlilio. With Tonette Orejas, Inquirer Central Luzon

NEWSBRIEFS

■ SAN PEDRO, Laguna

Blasting caps seized

AT LEAST 6,150 pieces of blasting caps were seized in a bus bound for Mindoro at the Batangas Port on Friday, an official of the Philippine Coast Guard said Wednesday.

Station commander Troy Cornelio of the Coast Guard said the explosive devices were found by dogs in the compartment of a Dimta bus before it boarded a roll-on, roll-off ship.

Cornelio said the items would be brought to Iloilo.

Marlar Diaz, Inquirer Southern Luzon

■ BUKIDNAN, Bongkot

Chemical waste training

FIELD technicians of agrochemical companies and the Fertilizer and Pesticides Authority (FPA) trained on Tuesday farmers and officials of Barangay Lon Ilem in the proper retrieval and disposal of empty chemical containers.

The training included a briefing on the construction of a collective center for containers, before these are handed to a waste destruction facility in Tiwas Maitimis City in Davao.

Rosario Balao, FPA provincial officer, said soft-level operations would begin in November.

This town opened in a distance last year in spiking chemical companies to retrieve their empty product containers to avoid being used for criminal charges.

Delmar Cariño, Inquirer Northern Luzon

■ LOS BAÑOS, Laguna

Fire destroys records

FIRE destroyed part of the Cavite Regional Trial Court Branch 18 in Barangay Kaybagal South, Tagaytay City on Sunday, destroying some records, the fire bureau chief of Tagaytay City said in a report on Tuesday.

Supt. Fidel Vitug, Tagaytay City fire bureau chief, said investigators were looking at possible arson, but he said "I don't think" about the case as "sensitive."

Aaron Lapitan, Inquirer Southern Luzon

■ DAGUPAN CITY

Village gets P1.8M

A TOTAL of P1.8 million in aid was given to Barangay Sonsonlan, which the military and the police tagged as a red-tagged village, to prop the economic conditions of its residents.

Mayor Ernesto Lalata said the fresh aid came in the form of a cattle dispersal program that would benefit 20 farmers in Sitio Ragan in the village.

Elda F. Aguirre, Inquirer Mindanao

■ COTABATO CITY

Jica focus: Roads

THE PLANNED elaborate road network that would connect provinces in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) to other parts of Mindanao could help improve the economy of the region, a Japanese official said.

The ARMM—composed of the provinces of Maguindanao, Shariff Kabunsuan, Tawi-Tawi, Sulu, Basilan and Lanao del Sur—to consist-avail one of the country's poorest regions despite the bright prospects for agricultural production.

Ryo-ichi Kitabayashi, deputy resident representative of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JAIC), said here on Wednesday that a Japanese-initiated study for the road network has already started.

She said Jica and the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) had infused up to P2 billion for the survey of the region's 8,000 kilometers of total road, of which, "only 10 percent" are paved or rehabilitated, based on a report by the Department of Public Works and Highways.

Charlie C. Galvez, Inquirer Mindanao

Greening of riverbanks

WITH no specific flood control functions, the Subanon-on Region in Misamis Occidental (ARMM) might turn to greening its riverbanks to stop flooding.

Nasrul Mijil, ARMM public works secretary, said the national office of the DPWH continues to maintain flood control functions on the ARMM's left with no option but to think of other ways to control flooding.

He said increasing vegetation in the region's riverbanks is one of these options.

Rach B. Mariano, Inquirer Mindanao

COA says P1B in Camarines Sur funds unaccounted for

NAGA CITY—THE FINANCIAL RECORDS of the Camarines Sur provincial government in 2007 were in disarray, according to a report of the Commission on Audit obtained by the Inquirer on Monday.

The report, however, was released by the COA on May 16.

In its report on the 2007 financial operations of the province, the COA found a discrepancy of over P912 million in its property, plant and equipment inventory which it could not ascertain due to its inability to complete the physical count and reconcile the records of the accounting and general services offices.

Moreover, the report said, the provincial government did not submit some accounts for 2007 amounting to about P26.8 million, "thus, the validity, legality and reliability of the transactions could not be determined."

The Inquirer sought the reaction of the provincial government on the report but Gov. Luis (Lutgarda) Villafuerte refused to give his side, apart from saying that it also received the news of the latest from Camarines Sur governor-son Rep. Luis R. Villafuerte.

But atty. Rosa, provincial budget officer and general services department head, explained that because why the COA had come up with the report but requested that his statements be off the record.

The COA report revealed some 21 cases findings which involved taxpayers' money not properly accounted for.

The unaccounted amount could reach P1 billion, it estimated.

The provincial government's 2007 appropriations amounted to about P1 billion while actual obligations totaled only P941.7 million with a balance of P148.7 million, it showed.

> 'The validity, legality and reliability of the transactions could not be determined...'

The report said the various infrastructure projects implemented since 2003, totaling P326 million, or 60 percent of the total "construction in progress" account of P516.3 million, remained unfinished as of end 2007.

This, COA said, violated the terms and conditions of the contracts and deprived the government and the public of the essential benefits from the spending.

Advances amounting to over P10 million were reportedly paid to 13 different contractors of projects implemented since 2004 but remained unliquidated as of 2007 yearend.

The COA recommended that these advances, as stipulated in the contracts, like liquidated damages and blacklisting of poor or non-performing contractors, be strictly imposed.

It also recommended that the Provincial Engineer's Office validate the actual accomplishments of all the projects.

The report also noted that the provincial government recently paid in advance the amount of P12.2 million for the purchase of one unit of shipping vessel and one unit of a catamaran passenger ferry that violated laws.

The funds amounting to more than P10 million and received from national government agencies earmarked to the province of Camarines Sur were used for payment of various expenses that were not allowed by Special Allotment Release Orders and contrary to laws, it added.

COA reminded that any public officer who spends public funds or assigns property for non-urban thats for which funds were appropriated by law may be found liable for criminal acts. Jonas Cabilles Sabiro, Inquirer Southern Luzon

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Ranked among the top 20 engineering consulting companies in the world, GHD has over 6000 professional staff in more than 100 offices worldwide. Our Filipino professionals are currently assigned to our international offices in Australia, the Middle East, the United States, the United Kingdom and key cities in Asia such as Beijing, Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur, Hong Kong, Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City.

The GHD Philippines office grew enormously in 1999 with the award of a three-year term agreement to support the expansion of Maynilad Water Services. Subsequently, we expanded our core business in the water sector to include urban development and planning services, most notably for Ayala Land's Arcovia Cove and NuVali. Services further expanded with a strong environment group providing services to key players in the energy sector such as Quezon Power, First Gen and the Aboitiz Group. In the mining sector, we have provided both environment and engineering services to international companies such as Red 5, Lafayette Mining, Indophil and Carlton Mining. GHD Philippines also assists the International Development Assistance Group to facilitate and coordinate GHD's activities with the Asian Development Bank, AusAid, World Bank and other bi-and multi-lateral donors.

"With a large pool of technical and management talent in the Philippines, further growth to provide services to the Philippine market as well as key GHD international projects is in the near horizon. "Our international offices have come to rely on our Filipino engineers to provide high quality work even while working under tight deadlines," comments a GHD project manager from Melbourne. "They showed great enthusiasm in finishing the design and more very focused in achieving the project's goals. We look forward to a long and fruitful relationship with GHD Philippines."

"GHD's presence in the country for 10 years amplifies our confidence in the Filipino," says GHD Philippines Country Manager Franz Rott. "Through various training programs offered within the company and various project assignments abroad, our Filipino engineers are able to hone their skills to international industry standards. The GHD Board of Directors has tasked me with the responsibility of developing a whole new generation of Asian leaders for our international business. This process has started right here in Manila."

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Katja De Gunsten and Jessica Vittoria Mercado

Sustainability Through Innovation

At the United Nations Climate Change conference in Bali last year, the Philippines' Department of Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Jose Atienza recognized the potential impact of global warming to the Philippines, describing it as "one of the most vulnerable to the effects of climate change".

The country has moved to adopt renewable energy targets and incentives, but is still working with other ASEAN nations to adopt a credible greenhouse reporting system for the region. But with an increasing number of international companies now operating in the archipelago - largely thanks to the mining boom - there is a growing awareness of greenhouse issues and a need for greenhouse measurement services.

GHD recognizes the rapidly increasing urgency for society and business to address the global sustainability challenges of climate change, loss of biodiversity, poverty and population growth. Our response to these challenges is to manage the social, economic and environmental consequences of our projects, provide positive outcomes and avoid serious negative impacts.

GHD has been providing its Australian clients with greenhouse gas inventory, assessment, benchmarking and verification services and has moved to do the same in the Philippines. Two members of the Environmental Group from the Manila office were seconded to Melbourne learn about greenhouse gas reporting.

"GHD's Manila office already offers environmental services including impact assessments, baseline studies, monitoring and audits. While it has enjoyed the support of specialists in more than 100 offices globally, the Manila/Melbourne exchange will boost the portfolio of services it can offer its Philippine-based clients," says Ian Borja, GHD Philippines Environment Group Manager. Environmental Engineer Justine Polanco-Mercado and Environmental Scientist Katja De Gunsten will spend up to two months in Australia working on greenhouse gas assessments and audits.

Justine, 28, grew up in the island province of Palawan, often described as the Philippines' last environmental frontier. She studied chemical engineering in Manila before undertaking a Masters in Environmental Management in New Zealand, and has been with GHD since 2002.

Katja, 23, was born in Mindanao in the southern Philippines and studied environmental science in Manila. She joined GHD as a graduate in 2007. Justine said the growth in opportunities for the GHD Manila Office is very exciting.

GHD Philippines Country Manager Franz Rott said he was excited to have two Filipino staff trained to perform greenhouse gas assessments. "When combined with the LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environment Design) accredited professional training being undertaken by GHD engineering staff in Manila, GHD Philippines will position itself very well to meet the growing demands of an increasingly climate change-conscious marketplace."

SEN. BARACK OBAMA (left) speaks to Joe Wurzelbacher as he surveys a neighborhood in Holland, Ohio, in this Dec. 12, 2008, file photo. Wurzelbacher, a plumber, was mentioned several times in the final presidential debate between Obama and Sen. John McCain.

AFP/FILE

Who is Joe the Plumber?

HEMPSTEAD, NEW YORK—Who was the star of Wednesday's final presidential debate—John McCain or Barack Obama?

Surprise, it's Joe the plumber.

The final face-to-face clash between the two Ivies White House rivals granted no unrepented 15 minutes of fame to Joe Wurzelbacher.

Until Sunday, when he bumped into Senator Obama while the Democratic presidential candidate was doing a spell of door-to-door canvassing, Wurzelbacher was living a normal life, unknown to most of his fellow Americans.

But his encounter with Obama in Toledo, Ohio, and a spirited debate about the front-running Democrat's tax policy turned him into a media star.

Both candidates spoke directly to Wurzelbacher, turning him into a real life version of "Joe Six Pack," the ordinary guy chasing the American dream, as they faced off in their third and final debate.

"Joe wants to buy the business that he's been in for all these years," McCain said, using Obama's encounter with the plumber to fire his rival over a tax plan he maintains would shackle small businesses.

"Joe wants to buy the business that he's been in for all these years. Worked 10, 12 hours a day. And he wanted to buy the business, but he looked at your tax plans and he sure that he was going to pay much higher taxes."

Obama's version

Obama hit back, with his version of his chat with Joe.

"What I essentially said to him was, five years ago, when you were in the position to buy your business, you needed a tax cut then," Obama said.

"And what I want to do is to make sure that the plumber, the nurse, the firefighter, the resident, the young entrepreneur who doesn't yet have money, I want to give them a tax break now."

Community hero

Wurzelbacher has emerged as a hero of the conservative talk radio community for blue-collar pitch Obama and his economic plan that the Obama economic plan would make him pay higher taxes and small out his hope to expand his business.

He was asked about the conversation during an interview on Fox News on Tuesday.

"Robin Hood stole from greedy rich people and redistributed it to the peasants, so to speak, so if he's calling us peasants, I kind of resent that," Wurzelbacher said.

He added that the American Dream for him was "you work hard. You're going to get what you want eventually." AFP

McCain comes out swinging in last debate

From page A1

pedestal and emerged in a seemingly strong position, riding a lead in national opinion polls and Election Day less than three weeks away on Nov. 4.

In a post-debate poll taken by CNN, 55 percent of respondents said Obama won the debate compared to 34 for McCain, with 70 percent saying Obama was more likeable. A CBS poll scored the debate 53-22 percent for the Democrat.

Obama also leads McCain by 49 percent to 44 percent among likely US voters in the latest bare-ring tracking poll taken before the debate, up slightly from a 4-point lead on Wednesday according to a Reuters/C-SPAN/ZOGBY survey.

Throughout the 90-minute exchange moments during the debate — their third and last — that might have reshaped the nature of the race wrestling in Obama's favor.

McCain got off the line of the night in rejecting Obama's argument that the Arizona senator was a clone of unpopular President George W. Bush.

"Senator Obama, I am not President Bush. If you wanted to run against President Bush, you should have run four years ago," he said.

Double-edged tactic

McCain repeatedly raised the issue of whether the Illinois senator can be trusted, breaking his silence at three debates on Obama's ties to 1960s radical William Ayers, a founding member of the anti-Vietnam War Weather Underground group that bombed the Pentagon and the US Capitol in the early 1970s.

"That was McCain's best debate," Republican strategist Ed Rollins said. "He had Obama on the defense most of the evening and he doesn't with trust. Trust and judgment are what that thing is going to be all about."

But McCain was also in a quandary. To strike up the race he had to go on the attack, but the tactic was a double-edged sword, because attacking can turn off some voters.

In fact, a New York Times/CBS News poll this week reported many Americans thought a recent negative ads taken by McCain had done him more harm than good.

Body language

Bruce Merrill, professor of media and mass communications at Arizona State University, thought that McCain did well, though not enough.

"I really think that his acquaintance, the attack mode was one that does not play well with women and independents," Merrill said.

Body language played possibly a bigger role in this debate than in the others. Obama spent much of the debate sitting behind a desk, taking notes, while McCain was free to roam the stage.

US DEMOCRATIC presidential candidate Barack Obama (left) and Republican John McCain greet each other at the end of their third and final presidential debate at Hofstra University on Dec. 15, 2008, in Hempstead, New York.

***

Obama's head was often bowed as he listened to McCain's attacks, and he frequently looked down at his notes.

McCain, by contrast, was free to look directly at Obama and his body language was often confrontational.

At one point, McCain was so close to Obama that he appeared to be looking down on the Democrat.

Obama's good going into the last face-to-face confrontation with McCain was to avoid any major mistakes, and his supporters believed he succeeded.

"I think Obama knew he had more to lose in this race than McCain frankly," said Democratic strategist Liz Chadderdon.

Last chance

McCain desperately needs to change the trajectory of a race tilting significantly toward Obama.

Democratic voters astounden Republicans, the economic crisis has transformed the race in Obama's favor, President Bush is extremely unpopular, most voters think the country is on the wrong track and the Democrat is leading in key states polling.

There's little McCain can do on his own to change the dynamic. Not that he didn't try.

Again and again, McCain looked directly at Obama and let him have it.

Obama had a ready answer for McCain and brushed aside the negatives.

"I think the American people are less interested in the hope feelings during the course of the campaign than addressing the issues that matter to them so deeply," the Democrat said.

Obama looked presidential

McCain's eagerness could be seen in his demeanor as he seemed to pounce after each Obama statement. Eyes wide, he breathed deeply, moved his eyebrows up and shot sharp glances in Obama's direction.

Obama's usually unruly demeanor, meanwhile, was regularly broken by big smiles as McCain attacked.

Over the course of the debates, a confident and collected Obama held his own in what amounted to an audition for the chief executive position.

The debate said a lot about both candidates. McCain did better Wednesday than ever before but, even as he took pounden, Obama succeeded in appearing presidential.

With the election in less than three weeks, the debate season is over and there are no more high-profile opportunities that can guarantee McCain an audience of tens of millions of people.

Flush with cash, Obama has bought 30 minute blocks of prime-time advertising six days before the election; McCain may not be able to afford the same.

Over the next 20 days, both candidates will go after the voters who say they could still change their minds.

The Arizona senator's challenge is great.

In the race for 270 Electoral College votes, Obama has comfortable leads in polls in Democratic-held states and is competitive if not ahead in surveys in Republican bastions.

A look at the intensity of candidate visits and television advertising shows the contest is basically playing out in states that Bush won four years ago, with Obama dialed in visit Missouri, North Carolina and Virginia this weekend.

Only two states that favoured John Kerry won in 2004, Pennsylvania and New Hampshire, are getting serious attention from McCain. *Reports from Reuters and AP*

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INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The University of the Philippines Diliman, through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites contractors registered with and classified by the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) to apply for eligibility and if found eligible, to bid for the hereunder contract:

Name of Contract : Proposed Construction of Bahaygan ng Bangsa (Centennial Heritage Museum)
Location : Basement, Vinzons Hall (Main Library) University of the Philippines Diliman
Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) : PHP 5,941,441.07
Contract Duration : 60 calendar days

Prospective bidders should possess a valid PCAB License applicable to the contract (Small E, License Category C), have completed a similar contract with a value of at least 50% of the ABC, and have key personnel and equipment (listed in the Eligibility Form) available for the prosecution of the contract. The BAC will use non-discretionary pass/fail criteria in the Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids. The BAC will conduct post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A.9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR).

The schedule of BAC activities is as follows:

	BAC Activities	Schedule
1.	Receipt from prospective bidders of Letters of Intent (LOI)	Until 29 October 2008
2.	Period of issuance of Eligibility Forms	Until 29 October 2008
3.	Deadline for Submission of Eligibility Requirements	30 October 2008, 9:00 a.m.
4.	Notice of Results of Eligibility Check	31 November 2008
5.	Issuance of Bid Documents	12-18 November 2008
6.	Pre-Bid Conference	20 November 2008
7.	Receipt of Bids	4 December 2008, 9:00 a.m.

First time to hand in your Letter of Intent anytime until 24 October 2008 for the project at the Office of the Campus Architect (OCA), Coral Building, cor. Dean Reyes and Lakandula Streets, University of the Philippines, Diliman, Quezon City.

The BAC will issue to prospective bidders Eligibility Forms also at the OCA at the non-refundable amount of PHP 1,000.00 to the UP Cashier. Prospective bidders shall submit the Eligibility Requirements to the BAC at the said address. They may also obtain the results of the Eligibility Check by the BAC at the same address. Pre-bid Conference will also be held at the OCA.

The University of the Philippines assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of their bids.

(Sgd.) MARY DELIA G. TONACPAO
BAC Chairman

The Safest Milk for Your Baby is the Milk You Already Have.

In September 2008, four babies died and more than 40,700 children in China were hospitalized after drinking milk and powdered infant formula tainted with melamine. They suffered from kidney stones and renal failure. Several companies were implicated in the milk scandal. Mothers and fathers are still fearful for the lives of their children.

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Because we care about you, Meiji Seika Kaisha, Ltd. is dedicated to bringing you delicious biscuits and chocolates that adhere to global standards of quality and excellence. And as a favorite among children and adults, our primary concern is to ensure the safety of our products.

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Meiji Biscuits and Meiji Snacks: Tamago, Hohoemi, Hello Panda, Fruits Zone and Acheberi - Made in Singapore by Meiji Seika (S) Pte Ltd
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LUCIO TAN

JAIME ZOBEL DE AYALA

Sys of SM now RP's richest family–Forbes

Viewpage A2

down by $1.00 each. Ben-Hur Saez reports

Tan also controls the country's largest cigarette firm and has Hong Kong property.

Jaime Zobel de Ayala and his family had last year's richest, dropped to third place with a net worth of $1.2 billion after losing $600 million, Forbes said.

The stock of the Ayalas' conglomerate, Ayala Corp., had been down 46 percent year-to-date last year, partly due to the economic slowdown and soaring profits in banking and electronics, the magazine said.

Collective wealth

Another property kingpin, Andrew Tan, saw his net worth plunge $400 million to $700 million. He was listed in fourth place.

The 57-year-old tycoon made much of his wealth as an office developer for the cutscorching industry and is now betting on gaming and tourism.

Forbes said the global financial turmoil pared down the collective wealth of the Philippines' 92 richest by 18 percent to $14 billion from $17 billion in 2007.

It said 23 Filipino tycoons, including some in real estate and banking, "not poorer" this year because the Philippine Stock Exchange had dived 35 percent in the last 12 months.

Richest politician

The country's richest politician, Senate President Manuel Villar, who is the largest shareholder in high-end homebuilder Vista Land & Lifescapes Inc., fell outside the top 10 list from No. 9 to No. 11.

Villar's net worth plunged 55 percent to $425 million.

Also hit hard was property tycoon Andrew Tomimson of Filinvest Land, who fell 16 places to 17th after losing $620 million to give him a net worth of $295 million.

Also in Top 10

The top 10 list published on the Forbes website included Kathleen Foods founder-owners Tony Tan Caktiong and his family with a net worth of $690 million, in 8th place.

John Gokongwei Jr., founder of the JG Summit conglomerate, and his family were No. 6 with a net worth of $800 million.

Ambassador Edgardo "Dondon" Cojuangco of food and beverage giant San Miguel Corp. was in seventh place with $630 million, Forbes said.

Major port operator Enrique Razon Jr. of International Container Terminal Services was No. 8, with a net worth of $525 million, according to the magazine.

The founder of Metrobank, George Ty and his family came in ninth with $435 million.

Started from shoes

The old rich Arriola Bligo and Mercedes Zobel rounded off the Top 10 with a net worth of $400 million, according to the Forbes list.

The low-profile by married off selling shoes in the Philippines in 1958. From one store known as Shoemart, he built a multibillion dollar empire.

Today, Sy is Asia's biggest shopping mall operator, with 38 mega malls throughout the Philippines.

Of the 40 richest Filipinos this year, 11 tycoons died out going last almost all of them increases were because of reporting on new assets or shareholdings or the combination of relatives' wishes, including Sy.

A newcomer

The Philippines had three billionaires this year compared with four last year as Andrews Tan lost this elite status.

Lourdes Montenegro seemed to buck the trend as shares of her the Danoes Investment Corp. increased $109 million to crash her to No. 33 with a net worth of $68 million.

There was only one newcomer, Roberto Ramos of Atlas Consolidated Mining, who debuted at No. 33 with a net worth $120 million.

Media owners

Several media owners were among the wealthiest 40, including Emilio Yap and his family, who are also in banking and construction. They made it to No. 12 on the Forbes list, with $420 million.

Oscar Lopez and family of the media giant ABS-CBN were No. 16 with $240 million, while Eugenio Lopez III and family, also of ABS-CBN, were 28th on the list with $85 million.

Also on the list were three billionaires with interests in GMA Network. They are Menardo Jimenez and family (No. 21) with a net worth of $129 million, Gilberto Duavit and family (No. 22), with $125 million and Felipe Gozon and family (No. 28), with $113 million, according to the Forbes website.

Businessman and former Ambassador Bienvenido Tantoco and his family, who run the upscale Rustan department store, was in 37th place with a net worth of $90 million.

Minimum of $30M

A net worth of $30 million is required to make the Philippines' rich list, unchanged from last year.

Rustans Tantoco had net worth of less than $100 million and four of last year's members failed to make the list.

The list of the Philippine riches will be featured in the Oct. 20 issue of Forbes Asia magazine, which will be available this week. Reports from AP and AFP

No letup in search for 2 missing UP coeds

By Nikko Dizon

RIGHTS WORKERS HAVE renewed their thrusts will be no letup in the search for two missing activists from the University of the Philippines (UP), Sherlyn Cadapan and Karen Empeño, especially after possible evidence gathered in the headquarters of the former Bataan detachment of the Armed Forces that allegedly shattered claims had filed a pleaic drum.

"We will continue looking for them. We are pursuing any clue or lead that would lead us to them," Bonn Cervantes, spokesperson of the leftist rights group Karapatan, told the Inquirer by phone.

Cadapan and Empeño have been missing for two years, along with a companion, Manuel Merino, after allegedly being abducted by members of the military in Hagonoy, Bulacan.

Cervantes said new clues full of possible evidence that included personal effects and soil samples had already been sent to the UP Department of Anthropology for examination.

Earlier this week, former detainee Raymond Manalo led a fact-finding team to a village in Limay, Bataan, in search of evidence that would prove allegations of military involvement in the enforced disappearances and killings of political activists.

The team was able to recover a small fragment of what on paper said was a human bone in the area where Manalo said the body of Merino was buried by soldiers from the 24th Infantry Battalion in June last year.

Manalo, who had escaped with five fellow detainees, was another military camp, said that the area were detained with the

CADAPAN

EMPEÑO

UP activists and Merino at the 24th IB detachment stationed in Barangay Elite in Limay from November 2006 to June 2007.

Cervantes said Karapatan would have to confer with the Commission on Human Rights on what further legal action the group could take against Bataan's former superiors.

Lani Mondejar, the mothers of Cadapan and Empeño and relatives of other disappearedin (the disappeared) joined the fact-finding team, saying they wanted to see the places where someone had positively seen the two missing victims.

Edlinda Cadapan and Concepcion Empeño broke down the moment they saw the place, which abounded with tall wild grasses and mango trees.

"I felt weak and angry. They were rumors and yet they were brought to the kind of place that was far from everybody," Cadapan said.

She added that the practice of soldiers bringing suspected members of the New People's Army—even torturers—on a secluded fact-finding area should be made known to President Macapagal-Arroyo as their commander-in-chief because "it taints her name."

Empeño, for her part, said she was in deep deep when she felt her daughter Karen make her cry such a song that played on the radio in the bus as it neared Barangay Silitan.

Empeño said that she was convinced that Karen was dead but always cried to put the thoughts out of her mind.

"As a mother, there is always hope in my heart that my daughter is still alive," Empeño said.

BFAD MELAMINE TEST RESULTS

(As Of October 15, 2008)

MELAMINE DETECTED:

1. Greenwood Yili Fresh Milk (in Chinese character)
2. JollyCow Slender High Calcium Low Fat Milk (more Calcium & Vitamin D), 1 Liter
3. LOTTE Strawberry Snack KOALA Biscuit
4. Mengniu Drink (in Chinese character)

ADVISORY FROM THE PHILIPPINE EMBASSY IN BEIJING
MELAMINE DETECTED IN THE FOLLOWING BRANDS OF INFANT MILK POWDER:

1. Sanlu (Shijiazhuang Sanlu Group Co.)
2. Panda Baby (Shanghai Panda Dairy Co. Ltd.)
3. Synutra (Synutra International Inc.)
4. Gaolong (Hunan Gaolong Dairy Co. Ltd.)
5. Bein (Jiangsu Bright & Bein Dairy Co.)
6. Beinmei (BMEI) (Inner Mongolia Milk Co. Ltd.)
7. Mengniu (Mengniu Dairy)
8. Kouzi (Dunjiankou Dairy Industry (Tianjin) Co. Ltd.)
9. Yashili (Guangdong Yashili Group Co. Ltd.)
10. Nanshan Dairy (Hunan Yuyi Dairy Co.)
11. Shuhuanggang (Jining Dairy Co.)
11. Yashili (Henan Yashili Dairy Co.)
13. Anbaobei (Shenzhen Anbaobei Milk Co. Ltd.)
14. Xiaoyi (Guangzhou Hero Dairy Co.)
15. Jinding (Guangzhou Jinding Dairy Co.)
16. Yili (Inner Mongolia Yili Industrial Group Co.)
17. Aumeinadier (Aumeinadier Nutriment Co. Ltd.)
18. Sanyuan (Shandong) (Qingdao Sanyuan Nutritional Technology Co. Ltd.)
19. Yuhua (Xi'an Huayue Dairy Co. Ltd.)
20. Leilei (Yantai Leilei Dairy Products Co. Ltd.)
21. Sananbi (Shanghai Rui'anli Dairy Co. Ltd.)
22. Hifod (Fudeng Chengyuan Dairy Co. Ltd.)

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TO-DOH K SA KALUSUGAN!
OK KA!
Alagaan ang Kalusugan:
Labanan ang Kahirapan

World stocks in free fall amid recession fears

From page A1

al stocks, Seeing Capital Matters chief economist Clifford Bennett warned investors. "Don't stand in front of the freight train. This is already a panic with further to go. The equity market game has fundamentally changed."

Japan's Nikkei ended down 11.4 percent, wiping out most of its gains earlier in the week. It was the index's second largest percentage loss ever and the steepest fall since the "Black Monday" crash in October 1987.

Seoul's Kospi lost 9.4 percent, the index's largest single-day percentage loss in seven years. Sydney shed 6.7 percent, while Hong Kong closed the day almost 5 percent lower after sinking 7.6 percent by noon. Singapore shed 5.25 percent and Taipei lost 3.28 percent.

Shanghai finished 4.25 percent off on worries that demand for companies' financial results would be hit by the global economic turmoil.

'Bottomless pit'

"The stock market is buried by recession fears," said IG Gekleman at Wedbush Securities.

In India, where stocks slumped almost 6 percent in early trade on Thursday, one broker described the market as "a bottomless pit." India's two stock indices managed to close just 2.5 percent lower.

Asia's stock markets also fell for a second day, led by a more than 6-percent plunge on the Dubai Financial Market.

The heavy losses in Asia set up Europe's financial centers for another bad day.

Approaching midday trading, London declined 2.69 percent, Frankfurt shed 2.35 percent and Paris lost 3.15 percent.

"Markets are now back in their lows of a few days ago as investors shun equities," Simon Denham of Capital Spreads said as Europe's major stock markets tumbled following strong gains earlier in the week.

Weaker than expected

Latin American stocks also fell on Wednesday. Brazil's Bovespa stock index sank 11.4 percent, the sell-off triggering an automatic 30-minute suspension of all equities trading. Argentina's Merval index plummeted 11.2 percent.

The latest bout of selling in the global markets was stoked by Wednesday's record-breaking fall on Wall Street after weaker-than-expected US retail sales data and a downbeat assessment from the US Federal Reserve indicated that the world's largest economy is already in short is full, into recession.

"Once again, a market rally is brought to a juddering halt by dramatic falls across global markets," Matt Buckland, a dealer at CMC Markets, said.

"The persistent fear of a global recession dragged off the cheer about banking rescue plans in the previous session with the Dow Down 7.9 percent and the S&P500 off 9 percent, their worst one-day percentage falls since 1987, as US retail sales were weaker than expected and the Fed's Beige Book showed weakening economic activity across the country," he added.

Investors choose cash

Wall Street stock index futures, however, pointed to a more positive start on Thursday than elsewhere, the Financial places 31st and Dollar Lynch were expected to come in with heavy sales down from losses on train assets.

Struggling oil stocks continue about massive government efforts to prop up the global financial system, investors fled from stocks, commodities and other risky assets to the relative safety of cash.

The price of oil fell another $1.88 to $72.66, a new 13-month low for New York crude. Brent North Sea crude dropped below $60 for the first time since June 2007.

Shares in global miners Rio Tinto and BHP Billiton lost 16 and 13 percent, respectively, after base metal prices fell overnight and Rio warned of slowing raw materials demand from China, for world's biggest growth engine over the last few years.

"The Chinese economy is pausing for breath after spectacular 6.90 growth," Rio's chief executive Tom Albanese said.

More banks rescued

Amid the turmoil in the financial markets, governments stepped up their efforts to rescue beleaguered banks.

UBS said it would get a capital injection worth $5.34 billion from the Swiss government and would unload up to $60 billion of illiquid securities and other assets from its balance sheet to a separate fund entity under an agreement with the Swiss National Bank.

Credit Suisse, which announced a third quarter net loss of about 1.31 billion Swiss francs with 2.4 billion francs in fresh write-downs, said it would raise funds from investors including the Qatar Investment Authority.

Governments around the world have already pledged $2.2 trillion in emergency measures—roughly equivalent to the economic output of Germany or China—including taking stakes in banks to help them stabilize.

The world's focus of attention, however, appeared to be shifting from the ravaged financial system—the biggest such crisis in nearly 80 years—to the backdrop of a declining world economy.

Calls for action

A Merrill Lynch poll on Wednesday showed 64 percent of fund managers see the world heading for a recession.

In Brussels, the 27 leaders of the European Union pledged to fight the economic slowdown.

"The European Council underlines its determination to take the necessary steps to react to the slowdown in demand and the contraction in investment and in particular to support the export industry," the draft statement said.

The EU leaders also said a forthcoming international summit to reform the global financial system should take early decisions on transparency, global standards of regulation, cross-border supervision and an early warning system to restore confidence.

France, Germany and Britain called on Wednesday for leaders of the Group of Eight (G-8) major industrialized countries to gather next month with the heads of emerging economies to consider a radical overhaul of the world's 60-year-old financial architecture.

The G-8 leaders were expected to meet this year on the worst financial crisis since the Great Depression.

Japan Premier Taro Aso, who chairs the G-8 meeting this year, again expressed caution about such a summit.

"Holding such a meeting would mean we are just one step away from a worst-case scenario," he said. "We are considering the idea, but it is most important to keep the situation from worsening to that stage."

Reports from AFP, Reuters and Bloomberg

This time, US recession will be long, severe

NEW YORK—THE UNITED States has not endured a deep and prolonged recession in more than a quarter century—enough time for many American to forget what one looks like.

But unlike the last two relatively short recessions, this one could be much longer and more severe, potentially bringing with it anxiety and job losses not seen in many years.

"It's thinking about recessions, people will naturally think back to the last couple" before early 1990s and in 2001, said Paul Ashworth, senior US economist at Capital Economics in Toronto. "What they don't see looking back at is further."

That requires dredging up memories of the economic slides in the 1970s when an Arab oil embargo started the nation oil energy and the early 1980s when unemployment and inflation soared.

The last recession—coinciding with the collapse of the tech stock bubble and the terrorist attacks of 2001—lasted just eight months. It was known more for the slow "jobless" recovery that followed than for the depth of the downturn.

Many economists agree that America won't be so fortunate this time.

"I don't think we can escape damage in the real economy," former federal Reserve Chair Paul Volcker said this week in Singapore. "I think we almost inevitably have a considerable recession."

The 6th's current chair, Ben Bernanke, delivered a more measured but similarly grave assessment to economists, saying the worst financial turmoil "may well lengthen the period of weak economic performance and further increase the risks to growth."

The signs of stress are starting to show: The United States has lost 760,000 jobs since last year, and retail sales in September plunged 1.2 percent, the largest drop in three years.

Every recession is driven by its own dynamics and psychology. The current slump started with the collapse in the housing market and got worse with sharp restrictions on credit that pressured consumer spending and businesses.

Different environment

That is a different environment from 1973 when an oil crisis sent the culprit, squeezing businesses and consumers. In the early 1980s, raging inflation and high interest rates took their toll.

Both periods saw millions of Americans out of work. In 1975, the unemployment rate peaked at 9 percent. In 1982, it jumped to 10.8 percent.

Most economists forecast a sharp increase in the numbers of people who lose their jobs. But they do not see it leading to unemployment on the scale of either the 1970s or 1980s.

The jobless rate is currently at 6.1 percent, and many economists expect it to rise to about 7 percent early next year—a level the country has not seen since 1993. Some analysts believe the unemployment rate could eventually climb close to 8 percent, which hasn't happened since 1984.

But first economists could begin to feel like those of the past are just because of lost jobs, but because of fear about the future.

Huge amount of anxiety

In the 1980s, as the nation struggled with inflation and a transition from a manufacturing economy to one based on services, Americans had "a huge amount of unnecessary and anxiety that lingered on for a long period of time," said Burt Ulrich, chief economist for The Conference Board.

"That element I find responsible to what we're seeing today, but some of the underlying dynamics are very, very different."

In 1974, the US economy had been growing for three years and unemployment had dropped to well below 5 percent.

On Oct. 6 of that year, Egyptians and Syrian forces launched surprise attacks on Israeli-held territory, which Jews were observing Yom Kippur. Arab members of Opec soon cut off shipments of oil to the United States and other countries that supported Israel.

Oil prices rose sharply and Israel's retaining oil fight more plus. Drivers lined up at filling stations an odd or even days depending on the number on their license plates. Some stations ran out of gas.

Period of contraction

A recession is typically defined as a period in which the economy shrinks for two quarters in a row. In the 2001 recession, the quarters weren't even consecutive.

But in the 1970s, the recession stretched on for a year and a half. Nearly 2.3 million people lost their jobs. By the end of 1974, the Dow Jones industrial average had lost more than 40 percent of its value. At the same time, the nation was focused on the Watergate scandal and the nation left by President Richard Nixon's resignation in August 1974.

The economy began to recover in spring of the next year, but inflation, which had eased as the oil embargo was lifted, spiked again. By 1980, prices were rising at an annual rate of 13.5 percent.

Reagan administration

Anxious about a hostage crisis in Iran and President Jimmy Carter's inability to tame inflation, Americans elected Ronald Reagan as president. He took office in 1981 vowing to balance the budget while increasing defense spending would cure the economy's ills.

Volcker, appointed by Carter to lead the Fed in 1979, took on inflation by sharply raising interest rates. It worked, but economists at the time admit the actions were doubtful about its economic future.

"That was the feeling at that time—hopelessness, in terms of how do we get out of this situation," said Anthony Campagna, author of "The Economy in the Reagan Years."

The next recession did not come until 1981, in preparation for the Gulf War drove up the price of oil. But the 1.6 million jobs lost was much less severe than in the previous downturn, and this one lasted for just eight months.

18 years of growth

When it recovered, the economy reaped the longest expansion on record—18 years of growth. The next recession, in early 2001, was similarly short-lived. The number of people out of work rose sharply, but compared with some past recessions, unemployment rate was relatively mild.

The fact that the last two recessions were so short, the economy relatively limited and the preceding good times so long has helped many people forget the pain of a more severe economic slump.

"We've become a little spoiled, actually," said Todd Knapp, a professor at Iowa's Cornell College and author of "Modern Financial Maverick nomics: Panics, Crashes and Cures."

That could make this recession feel particularly intense.

"I think no matter how you measure it, [the coming recession] will be worse than the last one," said Jay Bryson, global economist at Wachovia Corp. AP

Peso, RP stocks down: 'Worst not over, it's just the start'

From page B1

strongest in Forex in Oct 1st. bank.

While overseas remittances have provided the country a steady flow of foreign exchange in the last few years, inflows are expected to weaken soon that the global economy is on the verge of a major downturn.

Slowing remittances

Money sent home by overseas Filipinos through banks grew year on year by 18.4 percent in August, a deceleration from 24.6 percent in July, according to the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP).

Bankers said the year remittance to the US dollar's further rally against the peso would be at 48.50.

"It was driven by the dollar trip to offshore markets. As as stock prices were going down, sentiment on the foreign exchange market also weakened," said Jose Emmanuel Hibale, treasurer at Rizal Commercial Banking Corp.

The Philippine Stock Exchange Index (PSEi) fell 116.06 points to 2,122.37.

The broader All Shares index dropped 4.4 percent or 63.32 points to 1,364.45. Value turnover was P2.3 billion with 2 billion shares changing hands. Losers outnumbered gainers 119 to 5 while 18 stocks were unchanged.

Trades grew pale as the opening bell, knocked over by the 733 point drop on Wall Street on fears of a prolonged US economic recession as signaled by bad retail sales.

As of 9:31 a.m., a minute after the market's open, the PSEi dribbled 2.8 percent or 58.99 points to 2,177.44.

Asian stocks posted sharp losses on Thursday with main Asian indices plunging by as much as 10 percent.

US retail sales drop

Global investors were scrolled by data showing that US retail sales fell 1.2 percent in September, almost double the 0.7-percent decline analysts had expected.

Other data, released by the US Federal Reserve Bank, indicated the economy continued to slow as financial and credit market positions took a turn for the worse.

The numbers were ominous signs that the world's largest economy—a critical export market for Asia—was shifting into recession.

"Almost any market moving down, investors' trades will be taking its cue from this development," said Andrew Colquhoun, Accord Capital Equities trader. "Foreign selling may still dominate trades and keep local investors on the sidelines."

Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. led the market's slide as it fell P115 or 4.8 percent to P2,273 a share, while Ayala Land Inc. shed 6.6 percent to P7.10.

San Miguel Corp.'s A shares fell 2.3 percent to P95, while its B shares shed 4.3 percent to P94.50.

"We remain on a selective rate, no thanks to signs that the world is indeed headed toward a recession," said Anito del Castillo, First Grade Holdings managing director.

"Our position during about the market's performance is the very thin trade we saw to day," he said.

"This is one is an indication that most investors, while cautious, wouldn't want to join the rush," Del Castillo said.

Unexpected breach

Hibale said the domestic financial market wasn't really expecting the peso-dollar exchange rate to breach the 48 mark, as sentiment had turned quite positive in the last few days after the US government announced plans to inject fresh capital into ailing financial institutions.

But when US stocks fell sharply he said the market also sold down the local currency.

"Without the external factors, the peso should be at around 46.50," Hibale said, noting that the Philippine currency was undervalued by the market at current levels.

Central bank interventions

Trading volume at the Philippine Dealing System ramped to $892.5 million yesterday from the previous day's $734.45 million. Some currency-dealers said the BSP had unloaded US dollars to support the peso's depreciation.

The peso is now trading way beyond the 42-43 range to the US dollar assumed by the Philippine government for purpose of budgeting and macroeconomic planning.

A weak peso benefits some sectors like foreign exchange-earning exporters and households supported by overseas Filipino remittances.

However, a weak peso widens the cost of the government and private sector's servicing of foreign debt and also hurts everyone else by helping fuel local consumer price increases.

Other currencies also later

Currencies across the region also faltered yesterday led by the Indonesian rupiah which has now fallen by nearly 20 percent against the US dollar.

Investors across the globe fear that the major global downturn may be deeper than expected.

The International Monetary Fund, in its latest world economic outlook, projected that global output next year would reach 3 percent at the best scenario. Based on the IMF's definition, global recession refers to a slowdown in global growth to 2 percent or less.

With a report from AFP

A JOB SEEKER rides in an employment agency employee in Manila Thursday. The Philippines is the world's fourth biggest supplier of migrant workers, whose remittances account for a huge chunk of the gross domestic product.

GMA goofed: No $10B from World Bank

First page of 2

One of Ms Arroyo's economic advisers, Albay Gov. Joey Salceda, said the President was "probably just too excited with her announcement."

"The President should not be blamed for this," said Trade Secretary Peter Favila.

"Instead of bickering and finger pointing on an issue that can easily be clarified, we should work on getting the much-needed facility in the midst of a world financial meltdown," he said.

Favila said Finance Secretary Margarito Teves had phoned yesterday afternoon, clarifying that there was indeed a financial commitment.

But it came not from the World Bank but from the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

Notes point to IMF

"We were sent the notes and saw it was the IMF, not the World Bank," Favila said referring to four hours after a Palace briefing seeking to clarify the situation.

"The IMF mentioned a $10-billion facility for Southeast Asia, not the World Bank," Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Ralph Recto said in a separate interview with ANC news channel.

Teves and Recto were in Washington to attend the annual World Bank and IMF meetings and to initiate discussions with Asian finance ministers on Ms Arroyo's proposed regional crisis fund.

Hours before he came up with the IMF angle, Favila blamed the mistake on the supposed lack of coordination between the Asian World Bank vice president for East Asia and the Pacific, and Bert Hoffman, World Bank country director for the Philippines.

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo and Trade Secretary Peter Favila attend the opening of the Manila (MAN) International Auto's Best Design Destination at the SMX Convention Center. BEN SALDIVAR

Hoffman denied Ms Arroyo's announcement, saying that the World Bank had made no commitment to the proposed regional bailout package.

"We, here in the Philippines, we are well-coordinated," the trade secretary said.

Not discussed

But in a statement to Washington, Salceda said the World Bank did not anticipate the establishment of such a fund and had not "discussed commitments of funds at the regional level."

"East Asian economies continue to perform strongly and have made significant changes since the 1997 Asian financial crisis, making them more resilient to the impact of the current global turbulence," Adams said.

He said Asian economies like all countries must be prepared to deal with any effects of the turmoil.

Adams confirmed that numerous discussions with individual governments were held during the recent annual meetings of the World Bank and the IMF, and the institutions "stand ready to support all of our member countries across East Asia to deal with the challenges arising from the financial crisis."

He said that the bank's private sector arm, International Finance Corp. (IFC), was considering setting up a $1-billion special fund to recapitalize small- to medium-sized banks in poor countries with troubled financial environment, apparently.

Adams said IFC may raise another $2 billion or more.

Favila said Adams' statement superseded Hoffman's denial, citing Adam's statement that the World Bank would continue to support the regional initiative being considered by Ms Arroyo.

"I think there's a problem between Hoffman and his boss," Favila said in a briefing in Malacañang called by Ms Arroyo to clear the confusion.

Ms Arroyo first made the announcement at the induction ceremonies for new officers of the Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines in Iloilo calling on Wednesday morning.

She made the same announcement at the dinner she hosted later that night for delegates of the Asian 100 Leadership Forum in Makati dining.

Favila said Ms Arroyo received information about the $10 billion World Bank package from Teves.

Favila said the matter was discussed at Teves' meeting with Asian finance ministers and officials from World Bank, IMF and the Asian Development Bank in Washington.

But Favila said Ms Arroyo was not made aware that the $10-billion package was no longer brought up as a second meeting involving the same officials.

"The President merely relied on the reports of Secretary Teves," he said.

Better in the long run

Salceda also rose to the President's defense, saying that her original proposal of a regional approach to the financial crisis would be better in the long run for Asean.

"She was probably just too excited with her announcement, but she still be vindicated down the road," he told the Inquirer. "The regional approach will be more effective and efficient."

Favila said it was up to the Asean secretariat to determine the feasibility of pushing for the proposal for the World Bank to inject $10 billion into the planned regional bailout package.

In a text message to Ms Arroyo yesterday morning, Teves said the "guidelines and implementing mechanisms" developed by the secretariat would be up for approval "on private" by Asean members during the Asia-Europe Meeting in Beijing next week.

Teves said the mechanisms would be discussed in greater detail during a proposed gathering in Manila on Nov. 12. Results of the meeting would be made available in bunch of notes during the Asean conference in Bangkok later this year, he said.

"What is important is for the implementing guidelines to be consistent to the shared principles that the facility should be timely, sizable, quick disbursing and with minimum conditionalities," he said in the text message, which was read in response by Favila.

"The mechanisms should not dictate on us what we need," Favila said. "We should tell them." With a report from AP

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID
PBD II Nos. 02-08 and 03-08

BIDDING FOR THE PROCUREMENT OF SECURITY SERVICES (BIDDING No. PBD II- and 03-08)

The Philippine Regional Office II (PRO II), through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites qualified persons to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder project:

Project Nos. / PBD II	Name of Project	Location	Brief Description	Approved Budget For the Contract	Duration	Source of Fund
02-08	Security Services for PRO II, Regional Headquarters, Camp Melchor F. Dela Cruz, Upper Tumauini, Isabela	Camp Melchor F. Dela Cruz, Upper Tumauini, Isabela	Security services for PRO II, Regional Headquarters, Camp Melchor F. Dela Cruz, Upper Tumauini, Isabela	[illegible]	1 year	MOOE
03-08	Security Services for the Office of the Chief, Police Regional Office II, Camp Melchor F. Dela Cruz, Upper Tumauini, Isabela	Camp Melchor F. Dela Cruz, Upper Tumauini, Isabela	Security services for the Office of the Chief, Police Regional Office II, Camp Melchor F. Dela Cruz, Upper Tumauini, Isabela	[illegible]	1 year	MOOE

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last five years with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use the "pass/fail/non-compliant" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All participants relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Bid Opening Conferences, Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR). The complete schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

Activities	Schedule for Eligibility Check	Schedule for Security Services (BIDS)
Issuance of Bid Documents	October 20, November 3	October 20, November 10
Pre-Bid Conference	October 30 - 11:00 a.m.	October 30 - 11:00 a.m.
Deadline for Submission	November 10 - 9:00 a.m.	November 17 - 9:00 a.m.
Opening of Bids	November 10 - 9:00 a.m.	November 17 - 9:00 a.m.
Bid Evaluation	November 12 - 10:00 a.m.	November 19 - 10:00 a.m.
Post-Qualification	November 13 - 10:00 a.m.	November 20 - 10:00 a.m.
Notice of Award	November 14	November 21
Contract Signing	November 17	November 24

Bid Documents will be available only to prospective bidders upon payment to the Philippine Regional Office II Cashier, in a non-refundable amount of P10,000.00 for all PCs and P5,000.00 for Security Services. The Philippine Regional Office II assumes no responsibility whatsoever or circumstance or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of bid bid.

(Sgd.) DR. LEANDRO F. DIOSO
BAC Chairman

GMA on youth: It has something to do with genes

First page of 2

In the open forum, moderator Dane Tiu-ofley Ong, a leading businessman from Bicol, complimented Ms Arroyo on her looks. "You never seem to age. What is the secret of your youthfulness?" Ong wondered.

And to everyone at the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) 100 Leadership Forum was all ears when Ms Arroyo made what may be the evening's biggest presidential disclosure: "It has something to do with genes."

"My mother looked young. My father looked young. My brothers looks young. My sisters look young," she said, drawing laughter from her games at Malacañang's Basketball.

The brief exchange somewhat lightened the mood at the otherwise formal gathering, where Ms Arroyo entranced listeners with her major economic decisions had stopped, essentially shielded the country from the current global financial turmoil.

"The Philippines appears in relatively good shape, thanks to the prudent fiscal reforms that manifested in a 7 percent plus GDP (gross domestic product) growth last year," she said. "We took decisive action a few years ago to fundamentally alter our economic behaviors."

Asked by one delegate what she would consider in be the toughest decision she had ever made as President, she quickly replied: "Decision-taker."

"Nobody wants to take taxes," Ms Arroyo added. "It's very unpopular especially [since it involved] such a large number of taxes in one stroke, as we did with the EVAT (expanded value added tax). We stand down at a time when oil and gasoline prices were peaking."

She said revenues from the much-criticized tax had enabled the government to provide subsidized rice for the "poorest of the poor."

"It was very tough and I wouldn't have wanted to do it, but it had to be done," she said. "It is now what is helping us weather this global storm."

Another "Asean 100" delegate asked about her leadership style.

"I'm very hands-on like," Ms Arroyo said. "I am very strong in my thinking. What I learned in economics was very important to me, but it is also very important to see how to address the people on the ground."

She recalled how her former Finance Secretary Leo Camacho once described her handling of Cabinet meetings as having the feel of competence-based interview.

Confident that Philippine banks could withstand the global credit crunch, Ms Arroyo said she was more concerned about the impact of the crisis on individual citizens.

"Our growth rate is still pretty decent, but still I have to think what it means to ordinary Filipinos who experience the high price of fuel and the high price of food. That's always very, very important," she said.

PHYSICAL RESOURCES DISPOSAL COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO SUBMIT OFFERS

The GOVERNMENT SERVICE INSURANCE SYSTEM (GSIS) invites all interested parties to submit offers to the Manager, Materials Management Department, Lower L. Conference Room, GSIS Headquarters Bldg., Financial Center, Pasay City for the Negotiated Sale of the following motor vehicles on "AS IS, WHERE IS" basis until October 24, 2008.

QUANTITY	DESCRIPTION
One (1) Lot	Mitsubishi Pajero, Model 1998, Adar sander Turbo 1800, Plate No. GGA-129, Diesel Engine
One (1) Lot	Toyota Crown, Model 1992, Plate No. EBG-810
One (1) Lot	Nissan Urvan, Model 2000, Plate No. WEB-541
One (1) Lot	Alfa Romeo, Model 2002, Plate No. EFX-872, Gasoline Engine
One (1) Lot	Alfa Romeo, Model 2002, Plate No. EFX-862, Gasoline Engine

The above items may be inspected at the GSIS Headquarters, Financial Center, Pasay City during office hours. For further inquiries, please contact Mr. Willie B. Buna at Tel. No. 668-0363 or 478-3666.

The GSIS/Physical Resources Disposal Committee (PRDC) reserves the right to reject any or all offers, to waive any defects or informality of the offers received, to accept the offer most advantageous to the System, and does not guarantee that an award will be made. The decision of the GSIS/PRDC in this regard shall be final and binding.

(Sgd.) IBARRA T. C. POLIQUIT
Vice-President, Physical Resources Office
Chairman, Physical Resources Disposal Committee

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NEWS

World religions urge peace

Assembly asks gov't, MILF panels to resume talks, forge new agreement

By Lira B. Zulueta

WORLD RELIGIOUS LEADERS CONVENING in Manila to attend the seventh general assembly of the Asian Conference of Religions for Peace (ACRP) are urging Manila and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) to return to the negotiating table and forge a new peace agreement.

"We reach out to government officials and the people who have a stake in the peace process to return to dialogue," said Sangguniang Kiai, a member of parliament of South Korea and the secretary general of the ACRP, to a press conference in the Parenthood University of Santo Tomas (UST), which is hosting the conference with the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP).

"We offer ACRP as a partner in the peace-building process," Kiai, a Buddhist, added.

The call came after the Supreme Court declared illegal and unconstitutional the memorandum of agreement on ancestral domain signed by Manila and the MILF. The agreement sought to create an expanded Bangsa Moro homeland in Mindanao by carving out ancestral lands occupied by Christian settlers and indigenous Muslims.

Lourdes Mastura, president of ACRP Philippines and the wife of former congressman Michael Mastura, now a member of the MILF negotiating panel, deplored the SC decision.

Bloody alternative

"I feel the Supreme Court was very hasty in making the ruling," she said. "It should not have ruled because there was no question of law. The memorandum of agreement was just a roadmap to peace. The issue should not have derailed the cobbler's concern."

Emphasizing that her sentiment is personal and not "a unified statement" with her husband, Mastura urged another go at peace.

"We cannot afford another war," she said. "We hope to realize peace in this lifetime."

Former Miss Universe Margie Moran of the Mindanao Commission on Women also called on a new peace initiative in Mindanao.

"We should always push for peace," she told the ACRP session's assembly in UST. "The alternative is bloodshed."

President Macapagal-Arroyo will address the ACRP in its inaugural ceremony today at the UST Medicine Auditorium.

Also to address the ACRP through video messages are Pope Benedict XVI, UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon and former Iranian president Mohammad Khatami.

Some 300 leaders from the world's various religions are attending the 7th general assembly of the ACRP, which was established in the Catholic University of Louvain in Belgium in 1976 to gather religious leaders and make the traditions of religious communities as a force for peace.

Theme of this year's conference is "Peacemaking in Asia." Nearly all of the world's religions, many of which were unrelated to Asia, are represented in this year's general assembly. In the Manila conference are leaders of such religions as Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, Shinto, Zoroastrianism, Sikh, Tenrikyo, Shinto, Confucianism, Jainism, and others.

Even Ha Bi Kona is represented by three religious leaders, Kiai said.

Religious Assembly

The leaders will hold discussions on building peace amid the world's horrors and conflicts at the Manila Hotel.

Previous ACRP general assemblies, which are held every five years, were held in New Delhi, Seoul, Kathmandu in Nepal, Bangkok in Thailand, and Jogjakarta in Indonesia.

Kiai said in every general assembly, the ACRP would set up a "post-assembly project" and this year, the group hopes to put up a "Mindanao peace project" that would be financed by Korea, Japan and other member-countries.

The ACRP has been long involved in building peace in Mindanao, according to UST Graduate School dean Lilian Hosti, an official of ACRP in 2004, it held an interfaith dialogue for peace in Midsayap, North Cotabato.

An ACRP youth assembly was held early this week in Davao, she added.

The youth assembly issued a statement calling for a resumption of peace talks between the government and Muslim rebels.

"Using religion to label the conflict in Mindanao . . . must end," said the ACRP youth statement.

Aplus METRO
Editor Boler O. Dipanupó

DID YOU KNOW

METRO MANILA ranked 16th out of 17 regions in the National Achievement Test for high school students in the academic year 2006-2007 with a mean percentage score of 48.1. This figure is lower than the national average of 48.6 percent. Eastern Visayas ranked first with a score of 56.2 percent. —Cyril L. Bonabarte, Inquirer Research

Daughter, 9, used as drugs courier, says ma

Accused couple face child abuse charges in Manila court

By Tina G. Santos

A COUPLE WHO ALLEGEDLY USED A 9-YEAR-old girl as a drug courier two years ago are now facing charges in a Manila regional trial court.

Bukary and Noimora Bora, residents of Carlos Palanca Street, Muslim Center, Quiapo in Manila, were charged with violations of Republic Act 7610 (Special Protection of Children Against Abuse, Exploitation and Discrimination Act).

The charges stemmed from a complaint filed against them by Sahara Pagagan, a resident of Sikatuna Village, Taguig City, who admitted to authorities that she had put up her daughter as "collateral" to procure P15,000-worth of methamphetamine hydrochloride, more popularly known as shabu, from the Boras.

The complainant claimed that on Nov. 15, 2006, she received the illegal substance from the Boras, and left her daughter as guarantee to re-

DAUGHTER, 9,A

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Police recover 'hot meat' abandoned in Pasay City

By Miko Morales

PASAY CITY POLICEMEN AND officials of the Pasay city veterinarian's office recovered 230 kilos of hot meat presumably abandoned by its handlers past midnight yesterday.

"When we arrived at the scene, there's still no one," said Dr. Rodolfo Bermiano, the city's chief veterinarian, referring to the meat.

"Maybe the handlers of the meat knew we were after them," he added.

Earlier this week, policemen and five men on board a passenger jeep carrying suspected "double dead" meat, another term used to describe meat that does not go through government-regulated slaughterhouse regulations.

Bermiano said police contacted his team after they found the meat in a truck along Primero de Mayo Street in Pasay at about 12:30 a.m.

"When we opened the truck, we saw that the skin of the meat was pale and it had a bad smell," Bermiano said.

On Tuesday, police arrested five men at a checkpoint in Pasay for carrying at least 230 kilos of suspected hot meat.

The delivery reportedly came from Lucena, Batangas province and was headed to a drop-off point somewhere in the city.

BABY LOVE
Krystal Fenilet hangs on to her plastic baby doll as her mother waits for a bus along Roxas.

New ferry stop to rise along Marikina River

By Margaux C. Ortiz

WITH THE IMPENDING CONstruction of a ferry terminal in Eastwood City to Quezon City, residents of Kamuning and Scottsen Metro Manila will no longer have to worry about traffic jams on their way to work or to school.

The Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission (PRRC) and the Eastwood City Estates Association, Inc. (ECEA) the other day signed a memorandum of agreement for the development of the five ferry station along the Marikina River.

"The other ferry stations are located along the Pasig River. This is the first time a station will be built along the Marikina River," Secretary Cuelo, PRRC project officer, said in an interview.

Cuelo said the station, located behind Eastwood Cyberpark in Libis, would measure 30 meters in four other sides in the metropolis.

"From the Eastwood station, the ferry would pass through Mandaluyong, Makati and Pasig cities through the Napindan channel, then left to the Marikina River," Cuelo said.

Cuelo added that construction of the Eastwood ferry station would begin early next month. It will take three to four months before the station would be open to the public, he added.

The PRRC project officer disclosed that the station would cost P15 to P18 million to construct.

The MOA indicated that the ECEA would have the exclusive right to operate the ferry station within 2.5 kilometers of the proposed site.

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE
BUREAU OF INTERNAL REVENUE

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

1. The Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR), through the General Appropriations Act and/or CY 2008 continuing appropriations, intends to apply the sum of the following being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the:

PUBLIC BIDDING NO.	NAME OF CONTRACT	ABC	NON-REFUNDABLE FEE
2008-001	Data Center Hosting Services (IT Infrastructure Processing and Operations)	Php 120,000,000.00	P 5,000.00
2008-002	Change Management Services	10,000,000.00	1,000.00
2008-003	Facilities Management Services	35,000,000.00	10,000.00
2008-004	Telecommunications Maintenance and Support Services for BIR Network Connectivity	100,000.00	1,000.00
2008-005	Data and Scanning with Data Capture Services	15,000,000.00	5,000.00

2. The Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) now invites bids from eligible bidders for the P

PUBLIC BIDDING NO.	DESCRIPTION	CONTRACT DURATION
2008-001	Outsourcing of the Data Center Services (IT Infrastructure Processing and Operations) including the day-to-day operations and maintenance of the following processes: project management, building, provisioning and maintaining the BIR's IT infrastructure, and systems support, training for all the beneficiaries of the Bureau, data migration of the BIR's existing applications, servers and databases, operations testing, procurement work for sub-lease integrated facilities to be awarded this Custom Warranty Program with Business Continuity Plan, Disaster Recovery Plan, Security Plan, Capacity Plan, and Contingency Plan, and other requirements as stated in the Terms of Reference, and provide operational support to the computing and data center service provider, and other requirements	January 1, 2009 to December 31, 2009
2008-002	The Change Management Services is needed to provide leading services, and advisory services, to extend to the Bureau, particularly, Business Continuity Management and other supportive to different BIR offices through data warehouse	January 1, 2009 to December 31, 2009
2008-003	Facilities Management Services is needed to augment the existing BIR personnel to provide professional and technical services to the Bureau, particularly the BIR, under the BIR with the latest information technology in terms of technical professionals and technical on-call services.	January 1, 2009 to December 31, 2009
2008-004	Telecommunications Maintenance and Support Services for BIR Central Computer Network and Provinces is needed to maintain the technical infrastructure and the provision of technical support to ensure continuous operations at all times. Scheduled maintenance of machines owned by the contractor to offer diagnostic and preventive maintenance to keep systems in the operational state of the Central Computer Environment.	January 1, 2009 to December 31, 2009
2008-005	The Document Imaging with Data Capture Services is needed as an integrated solution for the conversion of paper documents with the capture of data and information electronically for the latter should be retrieved, processing, stored, shared and manipulated.	January 1, 2009 to December 31, 2009

The description of an eligible bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, Instructions to Bidders.

3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part II (IRR-II) of the Philippine Government Procurement Reform Act (Republic Act 9184), otherwise known as the Government Procurement Policy Board (GPPB) Resolution No. 09-2007, dated 31 May 2007. Bidding is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, partnerships, or organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act (RA) 5183. Only pre-qualified bidders may participate in the bidding. Pre-qualification is conducted in accordance with RA 9184 and its revised IRR. The bidder must have completed, within the period specified in the Philippine Government Procurement Policy Board (PGPPB) Technical Support Office (TSO) Manual, a single contract that is similar to the contract to be bid, as described in Section II of the bidding documents, and whose value, adjusted to current prices using the National Statistical Coordination Board (NSCB) consumer price index, must be at least equivalent to the percentage of the total ABC stated in the Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid for this contract.

4. Prospective bidders should have completed, within the period specified in the Philippine Government Procurement Policy Board (PGPPB) Technical Support Office (TSO) Manual, a single contract that is similar to this project, the value of which, adjusted to current prices using the National Statistical Coordination Board (NSCB) consumer price index, must be at least equivalent to the percentage of the total ABC stated in the Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid for this contract.

5. Interested bidders may obtain further information from BIR Secretariat, thru the Chief, Procurement Division and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from 8:00AM until 5:00PM.

6. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested bidders from the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee in the amount stated above.

7. The Bureau of Internal Revenue will hold a Pre-bid Conference open to all interested parties at the 3/F Executive Conference Room, BIR-NHQ, Diliman, Quezon City on:

PUBLIC BIDDING NO.	PRE-BID CONFERENCE	TIME
2008-001 to 2008-005	October 24, 2008	1:30 p.m.

8. Bids and bidders must be submitted/must be received by the address below on or before:

PUBLIC BIDDING NO.	DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF BIDS	TIME
2008-001 to 2008-005	November 6, 2008	1:30 p.m.

All bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security which shall be valid for one hundred twenty (120) calendar days from the date of the submission of bids, in the form of:

Form of Security	Minimum Amount in % of the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to be Bid
1. Cash, certified check, cashier's check, bank draft or manager's/teller's draft	One percent (1%)
2. Bank Guarantee	Two and one half percent (2.5%)
3. Surety Bond	Two and one half percent (2.5%)

Note: Suitable as demand

Late bids shall not be accepted.

9. All opening shall be at November 6, 2008 at 1:30 p.m. at the 3rd Floor, Executive Conference Room, Bureau of Internal Revenue, NHQ, Diliman, Quezon City. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders or authorized representatives choose to attend at the time specified.

10. The Bureau of Internal Revenue reserves its respective rights/prerogative to disqualify bidder/s for any ground/s which may render him/her/it ineligible or position him/her/it for non-award of the contract in accordance with the provisions of RA No. 9184 and its revised IRR. The BIR also reserves the right to reject any or all bids and annul the bidding process and reject all bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder/s.

Bureau of Internal Revenue
attn: James D. Bolano
Assistant Commissioner Legal Service
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee
Rm. 203, 3/F Procurement Division
BIR National Office Building
Telefax No. 981-7100 loc. 3203/3267
Diliman, Quezon City

(Sgd.) JAMES D. BOLANO
Assistant Commissioner Legal Service
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

Lim OKs permits for migrant issues ralliers

By Tina G. Santos

THE MANILA GOVERNMENT WILL issue permits for assembly and rallies of migrant workers and groups on hold rallies in the city's freedom parks in time for the International Assembly of Migrants and Refugees (IAMR) and the Global Forum on Migration Development and Human Rights (GFMD) scheduled this month.

The IAMR, which will be attended by 200 migrants and advocates around the world, will be held at the Bayview Hotel from Oct. 28-30.

On the other hand, the intergovernment GFMD, to be attended by 1,500 delegates from the international community will be held at the Philippine International Convention Center from Oct. 27-30.

Rallies related to the two events are expected to leaders of the various sectoral groups, including Migrante International and Migrant Forum in Asia, were assured by Mayor Alfredo Lim that they would be allowed to hold their activities at the city's freedom parks, including Bonifacio Shrine, Plaza Miranda and Liwasang Bonifacio.

Unarmed and uniformed policemen will be mobilized to assist in the smooth flow of the traffic and to protect the ralliers, Lim added.

New toilets for 17 Caloocan public schools

By Beverly T. Mabrilad

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT OF Caloocan City is set to build new toilets for 17 of its public school buildings by the first quarter of 2009.

Caloocan City Engineer Rolando Ildefonso said location sketches that it has prepared for the erection of fresh funds for the construction of new toilets for the use of public school students is encouraging budget deliberations.

Ildefonso said they are planning to build two four-seater toilets each in 17 public schools in Caloocan. For this, they would need a budget ranging from P3.4 million to about P3.5 million, he added.

The city government has, so far, only been conducting repairs of dilapidated school toilets.

Ildefonso said the city engineering office is currently finishing a personal standard plan for public school restrooms in the future.

The local government will also refurbish the toilets of the remaining 160 public schools in the city after the 17 toilets is over.

Ildefonso explained that once funds become available, they are eyeing a more comfortable toilet model—those located separate from the school buildings...for the most part.

Earlier this year, the militant teachers' organization Alliance of Concerned Teachers (ACT) criticized the Department of Education for the severe shortage of toilets and basic sanitation facilities in most of the 41,000 public elementary and high schools nationwide.

Ten Caloocan public schools, Caloocan General Elementary School and the Kalayaan National High School, were cited by ACT among schools with "deplorable" toilet standards.

Daughter ...

From page A20

sure payment for the merchandise that she sources out from.

Moments, upon leaving the area, she was met by a policeman who took the stolen and sold her to them.

When she went to the Barangay to report the incident, the complainant said the couple refused to release her daughter. Dagupan then sought the help of the National Bureau of Investigation which helped to the release of the girl on Dec. 12, 2006.

The girl reportedly told investigators that the couple used her as a member of illegal drugs during her stay with them for over a month.

The Bureau failed to appear during the preliminary investigation of the case despite a letter sent to them.

In her resolution, Assistant City Prosecutor Reil-Cruz said that although the complainant may be entitled to the custody of her daughter as the accused in "collateral" for illegal drugs, it was up to the authorities or other parties to file charges against her.

METROBRIEFS

QC opens lending scheme to budding entrepreneurs

THE QUEZON City government is semi-signs an agreement with a private lending institution to help boost its micro lending program for residents who want to engage in small businesses. Mayor Feliciano Belmonte is expected to sign an agreement with Cardinal Santos Credit Cooperative as one of its new partners in the Pondong Pangkabuhayan ng Ilaw Bulag program. The PPSB is a micro finance program for small entrepreneurs and other residents who wish to start a small business of their own. It has six partner banks and cooperatives to date and is under the city's Ugnayang Kabuhayan and Cooperative Center headed by Lt. Ramon Abad Santiago. "The program's loan beneficiaries are the city government's inspiration because of their high repayment rate of 95 percent," Belmonte said in a statement. CSCC general manager Monte Marasigan said in signing the agreement with the city government, after which their CSCC will become the seventh lending body in the PPSB. The PPSB gives loans to city residents and used by City Hall employees at a low interest and without collateral. The other six partner banks and cooperatives are the Cooperative Rural Bank of Bulacan, Kredibilidad Development Cooperative, SunCredit, ASA Investment, Bagong Muntinlupang Cooperative, Center for Community Transformation and Quiali Philippines.

Jun M. Jurado

MBC launches chorals, lantern-making tilts

MBAM, A Broadcasting Co. recently launched its Pasiklang Pinoy Initiative, to be highlighted by "Himig ng Pasko" choral competition for children in the elementary category for volunteer institutions, churches, special interest groups, as well as companies or agencies in the public and private sectors. MBC is also revealing a lantern-making competition through its ng Pasko, which seeks to encourage the Christmas season tradition by merging recycling techniques and folk craft. A total of P100,000 is at stake for the distinctions in each category. No competition mechanics and criteria/guidelines schedule, call 6000-3477, 6000-3405, 800-0238, 0915-4149 800 or e-mail ayong@mbcradio.net

CHILDREN'S MONTH
Nineteen legislators of the 15th Congress hosted by Liz Pinto (Rep. Cynthia Villar (center) distribute gifts to poor students during the Children's Month Celebration at the House of Representatives recently. The concerns of children took center stage as the congresswomen, in partnership with the Philippine Legislators' Committee on Population and Development Inc., Committee on Welfare of Children, Committee on Economic, Gabriela Women's Party, Jalikan NGO Watch South and Philippine Foundation for Breast Care Inc., joined forces. With Representative Villar are (from left) Rep. Annie Susano, Rep. Herminy Nicolas, Rep. Horacio Catolo-Ocol, Rep. Girlie Villarosa, Rep. Ivy Arago, Rep. Celine Rodriguez-Calderaguio and Rep. Carmel Cavelloza.

What went before: China's tainted products

INTERNATIONAL CONCERNS OVER China's food safety problems heightened in 2007 after huge levels of toxins and industrial chemicals were found in Chinese-made products.

In April 2007, the US Food and Drugs Administration (FDA) found out through tests that Manik Streetman dogs and cats had been poisoned by Chinese pet food ingredients tainted with the chemical melamine. Melamine is a toxic industrial chemical that can cause kidney stones and lead to kidney failure.

The FDA since then began warning consumers about tests that point to toy trains, defective tires, and toothpaste made with diethylene glycol, a toxic ingredient more commonly found in antifreeze. All the products were imported from China.

On June 27, 2007, China closed down 180 food factories after inspection found that industrial chemicals, such as formaldehyde, were being used to make candy, pickles, meatem, and seafood. Formaldehyde is a disinfectant linked to cancer in humans.

The next day, US government health officials said they were detaining three types of Chinese fish—catfish, bass and clam—as well as shrimp and eel after repeated testing turned up traces of the antibiotics nitrofurans and fluoroquinolone, as well as the antifungals malachite green and gentian violet.

In July 2007, the Philippine Bureau of Food and Drugs (BFAD) said it was examining more than 800 products from China, including cosmetics and toothpaste, after several brands of candy and cookies were found positive for formaldehyde.

The BFAD also issued an advisory warning the public against eating four contaminated Chinese food products-White Rabbit Cream Candy (Shanghai Guan Sheng Yan Food General Factory), Milk Candy (Screamirilk Food Industry Co. Inc.), Baicong Grape Biscuits (Dongguan Baicong Foodstuff Co Ltd) and Yong Kang Fresh Grape Biscuit (Dongguan Yongkang Food Co. Ltd.).

In August 2007, the world's largest toy maker, Mattel, recalled 1.5 million Chinese-made toys due to lead over food paint.

China's tainted product crisis widened again. 19 after Chinese government tests found melamine (first found by the FDA in Chinese pet food ingredients last year) in liquid milk produced by three of its leading dairy companies.

The BFAD has confirmed that 15 Chinese milk products are being sold in the Philippines. (Elias Victoria, Inquirer Research)

What you need to know about melamine

Melamine is an organic base and a trimer of cyanamide, with a 1, 3, 5-triazine skeleton. Like cyanamide, it contains 66 percent nitrogen by mass and, if mixed with resins, has fire retardant properties due to its release of nitrogen gas when burned or charred, and has several other industrial uses. The German word "Melamin" was coined by combining the names of two other chemical products: Melam (a decomposition derivative of ammonium thiocyanate) and Ammelin.

Melamine is considered with formaldehyde to produce melamine resin, a very durable thermosetting plastic, and melamine foam, a polymeric cleaning product. The end products include countertops, dry erase boards, fabrics, glues, buttons and floor coverings. Melamine is one of the major components in Pigment Yellow 150, a colorant in inks and plastics.

Melamine also enters the fabrication of melamine poly-sulfonate used as superplasticizer for making high-resistance concrete. Sulfonated melamine formaldehyde (SMF) is a polymer used as cement admixtures to reduce the water content in concrete while increasing the fluidity and the workability of the mix during its handling and pouring. It results in concrete with a lower porosity and a higher mechanical strength exhibiting an improved resistance to aggressive environments and a longer life-time.

The use of melamine as fertilizer by crops had been envisaged during the '50s and FDA because of its high nitrogen content (2/3). However, the hydrolysis reactions of melamine leading to the nitrogen mineralization in soils are very slow, precluding a broad use of melamine as fertilizing agent.

Melamine, which has existed for nearly 175 years, is in hundreds of everyday items. It is on the surface of our floors, it holds together the particle board in our furniture, is in the paint coating our household appliances and is even used to make tableware.

Products made with melamine resins do not release the chemical and do not pose health risks, according to producers.

Melamine by itself is nontoxic in low doses, but when combined with cyanuric acid it can cause fatal kidney stones due to the formation of uncommonly soluble melamine-cyanurate. Melamine is described as being "Harmful if swallowed, inhaled or absorbed through the skin. Chronic exposure may cause cancer or reproductive damage; eye, skin and respiratory irritant." FDA scientists explained that when melamine and cyanuric acid are absorbed into the bloodstream, they concentrate and interact in the urine. Blood urea nitrogen, tubules, then crystallize and form large numbers of round, yellow crystals, which in turn block and damage the renal cells that line the tubes, causing the kidneys to malfunction.

"Melamine itself is not toxic or dangerous. It can be used to almost anything but not to feed," said Chen, a sales manager with Mid Chemicals Corp., the international trading arm of Sichuan Chemical Works. Neither company has been linked in any way to the milk scandal.

THE CHEMICAL model of melamine

As the world's factory floor, China is not only the world's largest melamine consumer but also its largest exporter.

And this is not China's first melamine scandal, last year the chemical was found in pet food containing Chinese ingredients that killed cats and dogs in the United States.

It is now legal to add melamine to food anywhere in the world, according to producers.

"Melamine is not for use in food and feed and there is no approval worldwide of any authority to do so," Lena Archaset, a spokesperson for Linz, Austria-based Borealis Group, Europe's largest melamine producer, said in an e-mail.

The white powder is cheap and rich in nitrogen. When added to watered down milk it can fool quality tests that gauge milk protein levels. When added to milk, melamine, which is normally used to make plastics, makes the milk look richer in protein than it really is.

Health Secretary Francisco Duque III Duque said developing kidney problems from the consumption of contaminated milk was "unlikely" among adults because they were able to excrete food.

"Our concerns is more on children aged 0 to 36 months because of the recipes from China," he said. In China, Melamine-contaminated milk has poisoned more than 53,000 children, killing four of them. (Elias Victoria, Inquirer Research, Wikipedia)

The white powder is cheap and rich in nitrogen. When added to watered-down milk, melamine, which is normally used to make plastics, makes the milk look richer in protein than it really is

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The WORLD

Editor Lorraine B. Queen

US, Iraq agree on final pact giving US troops until 2011

BAGHDAD—WASHINGTON AND BAGHDAD have reached a final agreement after months of talks on a pact that would require US forces to withdraw from Iraq by 2011, US and Iraqi officials said on Wednesday.

The bilateral pact replaces a UN Security Council resolution enacted after the US invasion of Iraq in 2003 and will give Iraq's elected government authority over the US troop presence for the first time.

Iraq said it had secured the right to prosecute US soldiers for serious crimes under certain circumstances, an issue both sides had long said was holding up the pact.

The agreement was submitted to Iraqi political leaders for approval, a first step toward ratification. It is the first pact between Iraqi government spokesperson Ali al-Dabbagh said.

In public, US officials were subdued. State Department spokesperson Sean McCormack said: "Nothing is done until everything is done. The Iraqis are still talking among themselves. We are still lolling in the Iraqis." But a senior US official in Washington, who asked not to be named, confirmed that the final draft had been agreed by both sides and would require US troops to leave by the end of 2011, unless Iraq asks them to stay longer.

The administration of US President George W. Bush has been committed to withdrawing timetables for withdrawing from Iraq.

Dabbagh said the agreement envisioned US forces withdrawing from Iraqi towns and villages by the middle of next year, and withdrawing completely from the country within three years. For them to stay longer, a new pact would need to be signed.

"The withdrawal is to be achieved in three years. In 2011, the government at that time will determine whether it needs a new pact or not, and what type of pact will depend on the challenges it faces," he said.

Below side one withdrawal

THE US MILITARY said on Oct. 11 that US troops had been killed in Diyala this month and had been identified as Alex Quesada, Ignacio Ramos and Quinn Mc. Tim Iraq. AP

from the pact with a year's notice.

The inclusion of a 2011 deadline could have political ramifications in the United States, weeks before a presidential election. Democrat Barack Obama wants to withdraw combat troops by mid-2010, while Republican John McCain opposes deadlines.

On the immunity of US forces, Dabbagh said: "Inside their bases, they will be under American law. Iraqi judicial law will be implemented in case these forces commit a serious and deliberate felony outside their military bases and when off duty."

A US-Iraqi committee would determine which cases fit the description, he said.

The senior US official confirmed a compromise had been reached on the immunity issue but gave no further details.

A senior Iraqi government source who asked not to be named called the immunity issue a stumbling block: "What has been given to the Iraqi side in this deal has never been given to another country. That is what makes this deal special," he said.

Immunity is politically sensitive in Iraq after a number of cases in which Iraqis say the US military dealt too leniently with troops accused of killing or abusing Iraqi civilians.

The United States has similar "status of forces" agreements with more than 100 other countries. It allows them also to prosecute US soldiers for crimes committed in their military bases, but usually maintains greater protection elsewhere.

The pact will not require approval by the US Congress. Reuters

N. Korea threatens to cut ties with South

SEOUL—NORTH KOREA threatened on Thursday to cut all ties with South Korea if its new conservative government continues a policy of "reckless confrontation" with Pyongyang.

The threat issued through the ruling party newspaper Rodong Sinmun's name just days after the communist state slashed a deal with the United Nations to start a nuclear disarmament program.

Analysts said the North was trying to divide Washington and its ally Seoul, which are partners in a six-nation disarmament pact.

Foreign Minister said in a commentary that President Lee Myung-bak's administration is negating agreements reached at inter-Korean summits and pursuing confrontation and war with the North.

"If the group of traitors keeps to the road of reckless confrontation with the DPRK (North Korea), defaming its dignity despite its repeated warnings, this will compel it to make a crucial decision including the total freeze of the North-South relations," it said.

The North has for months heaped insults on Lee, terming him a "traitor" and a "US eyeplant" after he promised a firmer line in some limited areas.

Pyongyang has already cut almost all government-to-government exchanges. But civic and artistic groups from the South still visit and the Kaesong joint industrial complex north of the border is operating normally.

The South's unification ministry played down the comments.

"This is our unanimous response to the (North Korean) government's position," said spokesperson Kim Ho-nyeon.

"As publicly stated many times before, the (South Korean) government's position is to meet and talk to resolve pending inter-Korean issues."

The spokesperson noted the use of the phrase "defaming its dignity."

South Korea this month strongly complained about South Korean groups which float balloons denouncing leader Kim Jong-il and his regime across the heavily fortified border.

It threatened to evict all South Korean staff from the Kaesong estate unless Seoul stopped the practice. But defector groups were ahead with a balloon launch before Seoul's warning spurred it to action, sources said.

The balloons, which were also carrying responses from the authorities themselves, AFP

Bush should have been impeached—Donald Trump

WASHINGTON—PROPERTY mogul and diehard Republican Donald Trump told CNN on Wednesday that President George W. Bush misled the US into the Iraq War and should have been impeached when the Democrats took control of Congress in 2006.

"I was surprised that she didn't do more in terms of Bush and going after Bush," Trump said in an interview with CNN's Wolf Blitzer, referring to Democratic House Speaker Nancy Pelosi.

"It ... just seemed like she was going to really look to impeach Bush and get him out of office, which personally I think would have been a wonderful thing," Trump, 62, said Bush misled the United States into waging war on Iraq, a much weaker adversary than a dalliance with a White House intern his predecessor Bill Clinton was impeached for in 1998.

"We had, He got us into the war with lies," Trump said about Bush. "And I mean...look at the trouble Bill Clinton got into with something that was totally unimportant. And they tried to impeach him, which was unnecessary.

"And yet Bush got us into this horrible war with lies, by lying, by saying duty had weapons of mass destruction, by saying all sorts of things that turned out not to be true," he added.

On the race for the White House, Trump said he was rooting for John McCain to win the Nov. 4 election, and felt sure he could overtake his Democratic rival Barack Obama, whom he trails in opinion polls, in the next three months.

"I think he's a great guy, he's a tough guy," he said. "I think he'll be a great presidente. But, he has to be. John McCain and he could still probably pull it out. AFP

TO PART WAYS
British director Guy Ritchie, left, and his wife Madonna in a photo taken on Sept. 1. British newspapers said on Oct. 13 that Madonna and Guy Ritchie are splitting up and want a divorce finalized by Christmas. AP

WORLDBRIEFS

Thai, Cambodia military in talks after clash

PREAH VIHEAR, Cambodia—Cambodian and Thai military officials met on Thursday to prevent more fighting as their governments sought to quell tensions after a border row boiled over into a deadly shootout. They began talks around 11:00 a.m. in Thailand to discuss troop levels and weaponry, as both governments said they were seeking to calm the situation and ward off clashes. Gunfights broke out on Wednesday in a number of small pools of disputed land near the 11th century Preah Vihear temple, a UN World Heritage site on Cambodian territory and the focus of months of tension. AP

Britons get jail time in sex on Dubai beach case

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates—A British couple was sentenced to three months in jail on Thursday in a case that has several controversy in the Gulf boom town because the two were charged with having sex on the beach. The judge also set a one-day delay should not be enforced as a conviction in Dubai, not to enclose whether Michelle Palmer and Rose Acors were found guilty of engaging in intercourse, or some lesser offense. The two Britons, who are both in their 30s and met at an all-you-can-drink champagne brunch before the alleged incident occurred, were arrested in July and later charged with sex outside of marriage, public indecency and drunkenness. Both previously admitted they were drunk but denied having sex. AP

Company says shoes can power iPod

TOKYO—Tired of your iPod running out of power? A Japanese company says it has found a way to charge portable gadgets just by walking. Tokyo-based NET is developing shoes that generate electricity as you walk. The shoes have a small generator attached to water-filled soles. Each step puts pressure on the soles, causing the water to spin a small turbine and generate power, NTT said. The Internet-shoes currently generate 1.2 watts. One watt hour, "is about as much energy as an iPod mobile music player battery, as long as the wearer keeps walking," said spokesperson Hidenori Tenma. "The company is trying to improve the power-generating capacity to 3 watts, which is the amount of electricity to power a mobile phone," he said. AFP

SPORTS

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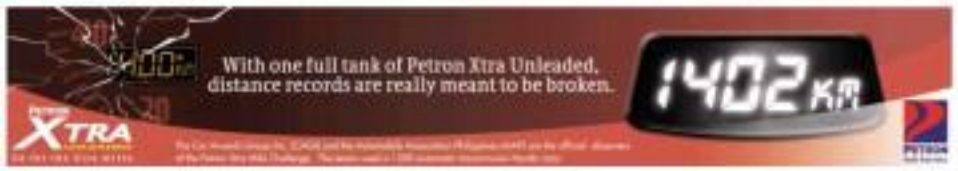

Aces thump Barako, seize solo PBA lead

RED Bull's Sidney Espino shoots over Alaska's Yeng Guiao (left) and Reynel Hugnatan in yesterday's match at the JCSGO gym. —GREGORIO DANTES

By Marc[illegible] R. Castillo

ALASKA NEEDED CLUTCH FREE throws in the stretch to get past winless Red Bull, 109-103, last night and grab the solo lead in the eliminations of the KFC Philippine Cup at the JCSGO gym in Cubao.

A free throw by Jeffrey Cariaso off a technical foul called on coach Yeng Guiao made it 81-81 before another Cariaso basket with 58.3 seconds left sealed the Aces' third straight victory.

Larry Sonsacie also had a split with 0.5 seconds left as Red Bull, despite a seemingly weak roster, rumbled to its third straight loss.

The Aces were in control throughout against the Bombo, building leads of as many as 18 points in the third quarter, 71-53, after an LA Tenorio three-point play and two John Pinto baskets.

Red Bull, trying to make do with a severely weakened lineup, tumbled to its third straight loss and joined Air1 at the bottom of the standings.

Meanwhile, powerhouse San Miguel Beer marks a third straight win tonight when the company big threesome battle an equally formidable Talk 'N Text crew at 7:30 p.m. at the Araneta Coliseum in Cubao.

Fresh from a thorough 89-82 win over Ralo or Shine on Wednesday, the Beermen's only problem at this stage seems to be how to remain resilient for the whole season.

Against the Elasto Painters, San Miguel Beer led by as many as 19 points, yielded the upper hand late to the fourth and eventually finished with a flurry.

It was the same against Purefoods as the Beermen led by 39 but had to settle for a 13-point win.

"That's a problem we have to address," San Miguel Beer coach Siot Tanquingcen said. "It's not that we're losing desire to play. We're just falling into dry spells."

For the Tropang Texters, this game will be a must-win [illegible] as Sen. Lucio Tenby, which dealt them a 117-96 beating last week.

"Playing with the biggest, deepest and most talented team in the PBA, all we want is to compete with them," said Talk 'N Text coach Chot Reyes, who will have one of the league's most humble backcourts at his disposal.

Coca-Cola gains for a second straight win against 4th11 outfitter at 5 p.m.

The Tigers broke through Welcoming night by nipping Purefoods, 103-102, in double-overtime thanks in large part to Mike Hrbacek, who scored all his 20 points from the third quarter on, and Ato Ibañez, who also had 20 [illegible] and 23 boards.

All21 is in one of its worst starts under Ila Pressel.

"More than anything else, we need to find within ourselves the will to win again," Pressel said. "We need to desire it, not just wish for it. Coke is a big stumbling block in getting our first win and we have to find a way to get over this hump."

Summaries

ALASKA 89—Miller 12, Arquiola 12, Yeaves 11, Demeritte 10, Pennis 10, Dela Cruz 6, Fonacier 5, Thoss 5, Cariaso 0, Hollerith 0.

RED BULL 103—Sonsacie 19, Espino 15, Dumas 13, Olayon 10, David 9, Cruz 8, Ong 7, Alejandro 4, Hubalde 3, Reyes 2, Pinto 2, Thomas 0

Quarters: 25-31; 45-58; 71-53; 89-83

Struggling start for Murakami and Co.

[illegible] Murakami and Antonio Delorieux marched even par 71 and trailed by seven strokes Chinese Taipei's Lu Wei-chih, who shot a 64 in a blistering opening round at the $500,000 Midea Classic Thursday.

Antonio Lascuña and Benjie Magada were two strokes off the projected 36-hole outline with 73s while Mars Parra, the **lowest Filipino** on the team's four going to this event, struggled with a 79.

The 25-year-old lefthanded eight birdies against a lone bogey to take some stroke lead over compatriot Hsu Meng-tsai.

Scotland's Steven Dolan, together with South Korea's Noh Seung-yul and Park Jun-won, shot 66s in order for third place.

Twelve players shared sixth place with 67s. They included Wales' Rhys Davies, Australia's Mitchell Brown, Andrew Dodt, Henry Epstein, Terry Pilkadaris, Richard Mok and Jason Bing. Chinese Taipei's Chen Yuan-chi and Chinese Ming Wei-hsi, Malaysia's S. Chandrasekaran and Singapore's Lam Chih Bing joined Tze Siews

Pirates down Generals, clinch berth

By Ray Lauren

SPIRITY LYCEUM OF THE PHILIPPINES University broke away from Emilio Aguinaldo College to the fourth quarter to rally an 80-80 victory yesterday and secure its 4th seed phase of the 2008 Season ASC-PSAT Philippine Collegiate Championship will start tomorrow.

The Pirates' second win in as many outings overshadowed the University of Santo Tomas Growling Tigers' 64-51 conquest of the St. Francis of Assisi College Doves in the last game of a quadruple header at the Makati Coliseum.

Though UST, which is trying to atone for its disappointing fifth-place finish in the UAAP, carries a similar 2-0 slate, it still needs to handle the Las Piñas College today to match the 16-team seed phase.

GAMES TODAY
(Makati Coliseum)
8 a.m. — UE vs. MU
10:30 a.m. — Ateneo vs. De La Salle
1:00 p.m. — UST vs. Las Piñas College

PHS's Felipe Villanueva's hitting 16 points in a rolling 11-1 run in a three-minute span in the fourth period, the 19-time accredited school, 81-76. The Generals fell to 1-1.

Thriving on last-break plays, Villanueva wound up with 25 points while Joseph Abaya chipped in 17 numbers for the Pirates of coach Ronnie Tan.

"Ang qualismo talaga namin at both ends ang nagpanalo sa amin. Di nan-ano quickness on both ends that enabled us to win," said Tan. "Masaya na matulungan ulit itong si [Villanueva] sa tournament. We're happy to come on the next phase of the tournament."

Former Philippine Youth player Johar Abadosa tallied a game-high 20 points as UST led by as many as 19 in the final canto, 56-37.

St. Pascal, winner of last year's UCAA title, moved within 38-31 on a triple by Jan Dewaan with 2:16 to go, but Abadosa answered with a key to quell the rally.

An altercation in the last 33.2 seconds led to the ejection of UST big man Mel Gile and St. Francis' James Cantalejo and Rea Layosa, the Doves' opscorer with 13 points.

St. Clare College of Caloocan, downing 23 points from southpaw guard Isla Montes, kept its semifinal alive with a 74-68 win over UPC.

JRU College dumped Dr. Dionpio Memorial College, 70-65, to forge a virtual rubber match with JAC for the last Group A slot in the seeding.

WPBL tryout expected to draw ex-varsity stars

FORMER AND CURRENT STARS of various colleges and universities are expected to join the open tryout of the Women's Philippine Basketball League on Sunday at the Jose Rizal University gym.

"We expect a large number of talented varsity athletes to join the tryout. Some of our regular teams are now busy scouting for players for their respective teams," said PBL commissioner Chino Trinidad.

"We hope to involve other companies and allow their players to join the league."

To raise the level of competition, the WPBL has set some age limit for prospective players so that those who are already ex-played by companies can still play in the league.

According to PBL chair Mikee Romero, players who are more than 29 years old are eligible to play.

"We want to have the best available players around, so we have to set a new age limit, and besides this is our first time in so many years to hold this kind of tournament," said Romero.

Chinese wallop RP girls

'Mismatch' sends Filipinos crashing into fight for 5th

By Jane Navarro

THE PHILIPPINES BOWED OUT of the semifinals for good as powerhouse host-four champion China exploited its height advantages to the hilt to rout the host country in straight sets, 25-18, 25-15, 25-17, yesterday in the 7th Asian South Girls' Volleyball Championships at the Philsports Arena.

The Filipino spikers now could finish no better than fifth after absorbing their fourth straight defeat at the hands of the Chinese, who easily marched to the semifinals with four straight wins.

"It was a mismatch," said RP coach Francis Vicente. "The height advantage was just too difficult to overcome. But despite the deficiency, we never gave up."

Long-limbed spikers Wang Haimin and Ying Jie crossed the net with authority and delivered 11 kills each against the Filipinos, who bravely put up a fight for almost two hours.

"We have the height but they (Chinese) lack consistency and skills, which contributed to our cause," said Chinese coach Wang Jingbo through an interpreter.

The RP spikers will meet Chinese-Taipei today in the consolation round with a victory ensuring them of at least a third-place finish. Taipei bowed to Thailand, 25-20, 17-25, 26-28.

In the other match, Hwak Ye-lim racked up 14 hits, three aces and a block as South Korea subdued Indonesia, 25-15, 20-26, 25-23, to join China in the semifinal round.

M. Sweeha garnered India in a 25-22, 21-25, 25-23, 25-21, 16-14 victory over Iran with 22 kills, while Rekvenia Akshara delivered 20 hits as Kazakhstan pummeled winless Sri Lanka, 25-22, 25-11, 25-8, in the consolation round.

India and Kazakhstan arranged a duel for ninth and 10th places today, while Iran and Sri Lanka will battle for 11th spot in the week-long event backed by Mikasa, Shakey's, AF Taisei Management Investments, Thomica and the Philippine Sports Commission.

THE PHILIPPINES' Denise Adessa Santiago blocks a smash by China's Wang Haimin in yesterday's game.

NCAA sees full roster of 10 teams in 2010

By Jane Navarro

TWO SEASONS FROM NOW, THE NATIONAL Collegiate Athletic Association will have 10 member schools under its wings.

In a roundtable discussion held meeting yesterday, the 89-year-old sports institution agreed to clear down the groundwork for the entry of two more schools in 2010.

The NCAA board officially accepted application from Emilio Aguinaldo College, Arellano University, Centro Escolar University, Angeles University Foundation and Lyceum Subic pending feelers from Don Bosco Mandaluyong and Technological Institute of the Philippines.

Management committee chair Ding Generoso of host Letran said the league will pick from among these aspirants the school that will take the slot to be vacated by Philippine Christian University next year.

By 2010, two more schools from the pool of aspirants will be added to the roster, Lozano said.

The PCU Dolphins will take an indefinite leave of absence next season as part of the committee for the school's commemoration this year following a suspension dapped by the NCAA for fielding several ineligible players in 2006.

Lozano said PCU will also have to apply along with the other aspiring schools to rejoin the league in 2010 after serving a two-year suspension.

"The target is to maintain the membership of eight schools next year and increase the number by 2010," said Lozano.

"We will start setting up the criteria for those applicants as soon as practical."

A reliable source within the NCAA policy board revealed that an applicant needs to cough up P5 million as entry fee.

Once accepted, the school must also participate in the 10 sports emblazoned by the NCAA for the next three years with stories in the high school and collegiate levels.

Besides basketball, NCAA also holds competition in track and field, beach volleyball, chess, swimming, volleyball, taekwondo, lawn tennis, table tennis and baseball.

Meanwhile, the joint NCAA policy board and Manosca will still sit Saturday to thrash out ng Philippine executive director Noli Eala to explain in writing the circumstances surrounding the shortened pullout of referees in the recent NCAA Finals.

WORLD AM GOLF

Bayron & Co 29th after first round

BAYRON Lam birdie

SOUTH AUSTRALIA — THE PHILIPPINES failed to maintain an impressive start and settled for a four-over-par 220 and a share of 29th place in the first round Thursday of the World Amateur Golf Team Championship.

Rufino Bayron birdied the par-5 17th while Fredie Asuncion capped his round with a bogey on the ECTSB hosted lens, carded identical 75s at the par-72 Royal Adelaide course.

Rookie Jerson Balanobar 76 failed to score under the three-to-par mark.

The United States carded with a 10-under 126 for a two-shot lead over Scotland and three over Puerto Rico, which posted 130 and 137, respectively, at the par-72 Grange municipal course.

Jamie Lovemark and Ricky Fowler both fired 66s for the US, which threatened to duplicate Sunday's runaway 12-stroke win over Spain in the women's team event last week.

The Philippines worked for a tie with Ireland, Germany and Austria.

The Filipinos vowed to bounce back with low rounds as the Grange layout today.

Balanobar opened with a birdie and Bayron matched that feat on the second hole in what looked like a promising day for the Filipinos.

But after three straight pars, Balanobar bogeyed four of the next five holes for a 40 and Bayron bogeyed Nos. 6 and 8 for a 38.

Asuncion, who bogeyed No. 2, turned consistent as the latter in the group as the team with six overs 37 after a birdie on the fourth.

Bayron muffed a couple of birdie puts at the back and stumbled with bogeys on Nos. 12 and 13.

SPORTSWATCH

Alcano leaves for US Open

FORMER DOUBLE IRON CHAMPION Ronnie Alcano leaves for the United States today to compete in the Elite/Advanced US Open 9 Ball Championship that starts Sunday at the Chesapeake Conference Center in Chesapeake, Virginia.

Alcano, a stalwart of the six-stalled Rugby Promotions of businessman Perry Mercado, will lead the challenge of a host Filipino squad in one of the toughest pool tournaments in the world.

He will be joined by former world No. 1 Francisco "Django" Bustamante, Rubilen Gallego, Lee Van Corteza, Warren Kiamco, Rodolfo Luat, Jesus "Boying" Pañia and James Aliazas the 300-player $250,000 tournament that offers $60,000 to the champion.

Pasay 4-stag derby today

A SELECT GROUP OF TOP JOCKEYS from Luzon square off in a three-race card challenge that pits them from Metro Manila in a 4-stag derby today at the Pasay City Cockpit.

Hall Sharp Dabaloy said here that the 48 fights will be staged to today's show-down. The champion will receive a guaranteed prize of P400,000.

The list of jockeys includes Fel Estrella, Alejo Vic Asuncion, Jose and Rubio Santos, Jake Macaraig, Sonny Lagos, Ramon Hernandez, Mayor Jesus Aguilar, Lito Rojas, Arnan Santos, Boy de Boss, Gov. Ito Pineda and Mike Rosa.

RP boosters encounter more player woes

By Cedell P. Tejano

ALMOST DEBUT OF ITS TOP STRIKers, the Philippine Int'l in the AFF Men's Football Championship Qualifiers was dealt another blow following the withdrawal of two highly touted midfielders-teens from Denmark and Germany.

Midfielder Jerry Lucena, born and raised in Denmark who now plays for AB Aabna in the Danish first division, encountered problems getting dual citizenship and will not be playing for the national team in the qualifiers, set in Cambodia from Friday to Oct. 25, according to Philippine Football Federation general secretary Pablito Sumaya.

Sumaya added that Stephan Schrock, a Filipino-German, was not released by his club Dresden-Pieschi, which is campaigning in the German second division.

Schrock is a midfielder who has played in seven games for Another this season and has scored once and assisted on two goals.

The Philippines will also miss star striker Phil Younghusband and his older brother, James. The Younghusband brothers, the 1999 said, opted to focus on their modeling careers.

The Filipinos, stationed by Juan Ubilla, have a 1-1 record in exhibition matches in Bangkok, where they are wrapping up their preparations for the Cambodia tournament.

Their hotel ousting Monday was a 1-2 defeat against club team Bangkok Glass.

Mark Phil Younghusband, 19, and Jerry Lucena has been elevated to the starting 11 together with Filipino-British player Chad Gould.

Among the notable holdovers from the team that posted a 2-1 record in the AFC Challenge Cup Qualifiers in May to Hoks City are defenders Aly Borromeo, Anton Del Rosario, Emelio Caligdong, Hiromu Stefan Ji and Neil Etheridge, who plays for the Fulham FC Reserves in London.

Filipino Dutch recruit Jason De Jong, 18, who plays for NAC Breda in the Netherlands, will suit up for his international debut in the Cambodia tournament.

The Philippines emerged as one of the top two teams during the qualifier held in Hoks City in November 2006.

HIGH FIVE Jia Morrazzone with trophy

Amazing Monzones foils Gaddi

ATHLETICS FOODIE KRISTINE JIA Morrazzone of GPI Having stopped Christine Gaddi's six-race win streak in the Cadet 66 division in the recent pentathlon leg of the 2008 Shell Helix Super Karting Series at the Carmona Circuit Philippines.

Morrazzone, a 9-year-old Grade 3 honor student at De La Salle University-Dasmariñas, denied Gaddi a perfect season while scoring a breathtaking victory.

Starting third on the grid in the 8-lap race, Morrazzone stuck close behind Gaddi and waited for the right time to engage his decisive move.

Twice in the 13-lap race, Morrazzone secured the lead but Gaddi quickly regained his position each time.

But Morrazzone, who's backed by Hanes Asia Communities, Cosmico Development Corp. and Dunco Auto Supply, made sure he wouldn't be denied for the third time.

Hitting the fastest lap of 54.871 seconds, Morrazzone finally grabbed the lead for good in the first turn with two laps to go and sure by a nose.

He completed the race in 13 minutes and 49.136 seconds or just 0.828 second ahead of Gaddi.

"I'm very happy with the win," said Morrazzone. "I took up to Christine (Gaddi) who is a two-time champ."

Morrazzone also gave a good fight against Gaddi in the second heat, breathing down the throat Cadet champ's neck going into the last turn.

But a slight miscalculation pulled him down to third after Pepe Fiscaniso passed him at the finish line.

Steve Silva, Contributor

Phillies advance to World Series

LOS ANGELES—THE PHILADELphia Phillies advanced to their first World Series in 15 years after wrapping up the National League Championship Series with a 5-1 Game 5 victory over the Los Angeles Dodgers on Wednesday.

Philadelphia, who last won the World Series in 1980, await the winner of the American League Championship Series, where the Tampa Bay Rays hold a 3-1 advantage over the Boston Red Sox.

"Next goal is always to go out and have your numbers do the game," Phillies slugger Ryan Howard told reporters amidst a champagne-soaked celebration after the 4-1 series win. "This is special, now we have to go out and try to win the next series." Left-handed starting pitcher Cole Hamels was named the NLCS MVP after he recorded his third win of the playoffs.

Shortstop Jimmy Rollins led off the game with a solo home run on a 1-2 pitch from Los Angeles starter Chad Billingsley who was chased in the third innings when he gave up two more runs.

Billingsley issued four walks and allowed four hits and three earned runs in 2 2/3 innings.

"Sometimes you swing and you miss three," said Rollins, of the fifth high pitch he threw out of eight-career field.

"Our goal is to win the World Series (though), not to win the National League Series. We look at it like we've qualified, now we have to chance." The Phillies scored two more runs in the fifth on three Dodger errors all committed by shortstop Rafael Furcal.

Howard led Philadelphia, going 3-for-4 with an RBI and a run scored while Rollins scored twice.

Manny Ramirez produced Los Angeles' only run with an opposite field solo homer in the sixth inning.

Ramirez, who was acquired in a trade with the Red Sox on July 31, will be a free agent at the end of the season and more to receive lucrative offers after leading Los Angeles into the playoffs. He batted .520 with four home runs and 10 RBIs in eight post-season games. Reuters

THE PHILLIES' Brad Lidge (right) hugs Carlos Ruiz as teammates Ryan Howard (left) and Pedro Feliz (7) join down in celebration after beating the Dodgers.

RP girl spikers need some noise

ONE GAME AT A TIME

SEE SATURDAY

ITS SAD THAT no one from Back in the games of the 7th Asian Beach Girls Volleyball competition at the Philsports Arena.

Students who should be attending are probably tied up with tournaments and projects or have already mapped out the premieres for the break. Or they are simply still in Baar.

One could easily say that a venue at the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex would have been a better alternative, being more in the guts of public transportation. However, the Philsports is a good venue for an Open tournament with plenty of room, mini with sufficient lighting, playing parameters and air-conditioning.

The RP girls team would have use some hometown support, a little noise perhaps to push up their spirits.

On a rainy Tuesday morning, the RP girls just couldn't get going against a well-drilled Australian squad losing 15-25, 13-25, 22-25. It was only in the third set when the Filipinas bossed up, coming back from 7-0 and then rallied desperately to extend the game with four straight points when they were down 19-24.

It was the second straight loss for the young Pinays, having lost the day before to a tough Russian side.

In the post-game press chat, Korean coach Kim Hong cheol observed that the RP team was athletic and could jump well but was "often out of position," making it easy for the Koreans to spot gaps in the Filipino floor defense.

• • •

On Wednesday, the one-game exit and a few home seeds reckoned to the Philippines raises the Philippines faced Thailand. The RP girls looked upbeat about the new day, unmindful of the sting of two straight setbacks.

The enthusiasm was shortlived as they succumbed to underrated seven and lost in straight sets 11-25, 9-25 and 14-25.

Thailand is one of the powers in Southeast Asia and its youth squad does not play too differently from its senior team. The Thais set up gunners Chanvadee Intasho or Lamphongkong Phimchaya for attacks but rely heavily on their ball handling and defense as well.

In the opener, the Thais strung together seven straight points and capitalized on faulty reception by the Filipinas. The RP squad got off to a better start in the second set but committed net-touch errors and could not contain Intasho, on the third spike of her game, Intasho runs opponent net running violations and a service window over dictated the battle.

• • •

The team, coached by Fenanis Herras, has rebables like Patty Orendain, Alyssa Valdez and the lanky Aiessa Jinenez but it is still very raw, prone to defensive lapses and need tournament play to find its footing.

Rather than simply discuss this issue for the lack of resources, it is better to view its participation as part of a long-term effort to empower young talent through level of competition.

One can only speculate what good it would do for Philippine volleyball if this tournament could be kept together in a good and pitted against an equals competition as possible.

With the strength of the Asian volleyball power like China, Korea and Japan, it does look like the RP girls are in for a tough ride in the tournament.

It wouldn't be so hard to host, though, if there were more people cheering than just family and friends.

FEDERER: Rebuffed by a three-week break

Federer, Djokovic hurdle rivals

MADRID—ROGER FEDERER advanced to the third round of the Madrid Masters on Wednesday with a 6-3, 7-6 win over Czech Radek Stepanek on his return from a three-week break.

Serbian third seed Novak Djokovic survived a scrambling test to beat Romanian Victor Hanescu, while Russia's Nikolay Davydenko, seeded five, was seen packing by American qualifier Bobby Ginepri.

Initially Federer had no such worries, romping to a 3-0 lead as Stepanek's nerves fell apart.

But the world number 38 stepped up in the second set—winning all but one of the points on his first serve—and seized the advantage in the tie-breaker with a sensational drop shot, before pumping his fist wildly in celebration.

Two points later he had won a game to inspire an 11-point 6-3 lead but could not hold on as Federer applied the pressure to take the tie-break 8-6 and seize a 2-1 6-in-one hour and 26 minutes.

Davydenko's 6-4, 6-4, 6-4 defeat was a major blow as the Russian is chasing one of the four remaining places in next month's eight-team Masters Cup in Shanghai and it came hot on the heels of Federer's Basel exit from last month's Kremlin Cup.

Ginepri now meets Frenchman Gilles Simon, who put out 11th seed Ivan Ljubicic on Sunday.

In the day's other upset, Spanish sixth seed David Ferrer was dumped out, 6-4, 7-6, by countryman Feliciano Lopez, ranked 33 places below him.

An out-of-sorts Djokovic set up a third round tie against sweeping Croatian Ivo Karlovic but was pushed hard by Hanescu before the world number 53 was downed in order with a gritty semi-when the match was poised at 6-7, 7-6, 3-1.

Fresh from his victory at the Stockholm Open, defending champion David Nalbandian overcame a mid-match wobble to beat Czech Tomas Berdych 6-2, 6-7, 6-3.

The Argentine will next play Davis Cup team mate Juan Martin del Potro, who advanced after Fires Jarkko Nieminen retired in the second set. French-man Arvi-Wilfried Tsonga beat friend Gnaedinger, 3-6, 6-2, 7-6. Reuters

Playoff eagle lifts Furyk to PGA win

MIAMI—AMERICAN JIM FURYK sank an eight-foot eagle putt on hole-finishing Harrington at the first playoff hole in the PGA Grand Slam of Golf in Bermuda on Wednesday.

Sixteen Harrington, who birdied the par-five 18th, again had to settle for the bridesmaid's role in the elite four-man event, having lost to Argentina's Angel Cabrera in a playoff last year.

The pair finished the 36 regulation holes on four-under par 136 at The Mid-Ocean Club in Tucker's Town, Furyk rewarding Harrington's two-under 69, with a birdie in the last.

"I'm very happy with the outcome," a beaming Furyk told reporters after winning the title for a second time.

Furyk, who also won in 2001, replaced the injured Tiger Woods in the end-of-season tournament that traditionally features the winners of the year's four majors.

British Open and US PGA champion Harrington held a two-stroke lead with two holes remaining before double-bogeying the par-four 17th.

Tuesday US Open champion Retief Goosen carded a 71 to finish third at one-over 141. Fellow South African Trevor Immelman was four strokes back after a 69. Reuters

FURYK

Bucks down Warriors in Guangzhou

GUANGZHOU, CHINA—ANDREW BOGUT scored 16 points and Luke Ridnour added 16 Wednesday night, leading the Milwaukee Bucks past the Golden State Warriors, 99-95, in an NBA exhibition game.

Milwaukee trailed most of the night but forged ahead in the second half with 13 points. Kidenna Arenbelis led the Warriors with 24 points, while Jason Richardson added 16.

Bucks coach Scott Skiles said he changed his strategy in the second half because of a comment.

"We were going to forget a lot because they had a small player on him," he said.

With seconds to play, Arenbelis missed a 3-pointer that would have tied it at 95. The Bucks then fouled Richardson to seal the victory.

Bucks rookie Joe Alexander, who finished with 11 points, was the second-heavier to this weekend (25-time city) NBA the first NBA player to be born in Taiwan and can speak Mandarin.

The Warriors took a 73-71 lead going into the last period, but the Bucks made it 85-83, with about six minutes to play. Arenbelis thereafter hit a turnaround from the baseline. AP

Ballesteros stable after brain surgery

BALLESTEROS

MADRID, SPAIN—SEVE BALLESTEROS was in stable condition Wednesday after undergoing surgery on a brain tumor a day earlier.

La Clua hospital said the two-time Masters champion "is progressing well" after the surgery Spanish state news agency EFE reported the operation lasted 12 hours.

The hospital said a sizable part of the 51-year-old Spaniard's tumor was removed. It was not immediately known if it was malignant and it would be several days before the results were announced.

"In the moment he is conscious and stable, although he will not be able to receive any visitor until he has recovered from the surgical process," the hospital said in a statement.

The hospital said Ballesteros was in the intensive care unit and there would be no further statements about him until he is moved from the unit, most likely next week.

Ballesteros, winner of three British Opens and two Masters, briefly lost consciousness and was admitted Oct. 8 to the hospital, where the tumor was discovered.

Ballesteros, who won a record 50 tournaments on the European tour, retired last year because of a long history of back pain. AP

SBP Passerelle Luzon finals up

THE 23RD SEASON OF THE MILO-sponsored Inter Center Scholl Tournament of the Philippines (SBP) Passerelle tournaments ended on Oct. 18 and 19 at the Eastern College Gym in Baguio City for the Luzon regional championships.

Grade school hoopsters from Saint John Cathedral School, International School of Boracay, Pagsanjan, Saint Louis Laboratory Grade School and Don Bosco Academy Pampanga will vie for the Inter Center SBP Luzon crown.

On the high school level, junior cagers from Divine Word College of Tagaytay, Mayfield Academy, Saint Louis Laboratory High School and Don Bosco Academy Pampanga will wage their wars battle for the Passerelle Luzon trophy.

The winners of the regional championships will represent Luzon and join other champions from the National Capital Region, Visayas and Mindanao for the SBP Passerelle national finals.

ACTION in the recent Antonio Cortes MCR finals won by the Blue Eagles.

Don Juan Derby Oct. 19 at San Lazaro

NINE TOUGH AND TESTED LOCAL AND imported 3-year old colts and fillies are entered for the keenly contested Don Juan Derby 2,000 class stella sell Oct. 19 at the San Lazaro racetrack Park.

The morning-week long racing festivities organized by the Rich Don Juan de Manila, ever headed by Ace Almeda, ushers in the big-time racing for the final quarter of the year.

"This year's staging of the Don Juan Derby promises to be very exciting as we come up with well-balanced line-up even in the other four major races and other supporting races throughout the Derby Week," said Almeda.

A total of P1.5 million is at stake in the 2,000-meter race. Entries in the Don Juan Derby and their respective owners include: Steady Villator's Holy Ridge (Carmo Ridge out of Almajara Dominguez); Rodolfo Pineda's Syrina (Gold Run (Spa) Shamwood); Hermie Esguerra's filled Gem (Gemini Pursuit), and Negligee (Tidda Delightful Mayor); David Puyat's Blue Elfin (Dapple Man Annie); Raymund Peyat's Bittersweet (Pamela Pegasus/Double Wagner); Victor Martinez's Super Leggett (Rompey-Moreover); Roland Lim's Lim Expensive Toys (Grand's Causeway/Prophet's Rise), and the only hard rule, Tony Tuvi's Shining Force (Royal Dynasty/Queen's Dance).

Also slated are the Juvenile Colts, the Juvenile Fillies Championships, the Don Antonio Peninsula Golden Gift Stakes and the Hotmar Farms & Stud-sponsored Mr. Farmer Cup.

La Salle-Lipa Stallion Cup tees off today

A GRAND FIELD OF 300 ALUMNI and guest players tee off today in the 2008 Stallion Cup Golf Tournament, hosted by the De La Salle-Lipa Batch 1983, at the Makiwalat Golf and Country Club in Lipa City.

Star champions, including regional campaigner and former Malaysian champion Jim Kimm, are expected to compete in the annual invitational that will raise funds for the projects of Batch 83.

The batch is celebrating its silver anniversary and will host the DLSL alumni homecoming in December.

Tournament fee is P2,500 inclusive of green fee, lunch, raffle ticket and caddie's fee.

The scoring format for the 18-hole event is Stableford with one-off tees set at 9 a.m., two hours after the start of registration.

For inquiries and donations, call Jonah Moreno at 09.17.937.2305, Dr. Ellen Ajoc Bercasio-Lontoc at 09.17.527.0066 or Jaqui Sabalvaro at 09.17.457.5573.

SPORTS

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MANNY PACQUIAO Earns preparation

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Splash Cup Open Golf Tournament

Splash Foundation, Inc. invites golf enthusiasts to the Splash Cup Open Golf Tournament on Oct. 17 at the South Course of Valley Golf and Country Club in Antipolo City. Registration is at 6:00am for a shotgun start at 7:00 a.m.

Trophies will be given to the Champion, 1st and 2nd runners-up for the Class A, B and C of Men's and Ladies Division. A lot of give-aways and exciting raffle prizes at

Asistio seizes Cangolf lead as Ababa falters

TONTON ASISTIO FIRED A second straight 3-under-par 70 spiked by three birdies coming in to take a four-shot lead over erstwhile leader Bernard Ababa going into the final round of the Cambodiana Asian Tour Open at Cangolf's north course yesterday.

Two shots off the pace overnight, the ICTSI-backed Asistio birdied the 12th, 14th and 18th to coalesce a 57-going-on.

He bounded 20 ft after 6-footer and looked headed for his biggest win since he was a teen.

The defending champion Ababa ballooned to a 76 as he dropped a shot on the 12th and another three of the last four holes.

Ababa, who entered the final with a 69-70 Wednesday, lay at 210, just a shot in front of the third-running duo of Korea who inched in 74.

Another stroke further adrift at 211 were first-round leader Anthony Fernando (73), Mark Brunzelle (69) and Chet Mitchell (72).

Enrie Bertoren, who is gearing up for his title defense in next week's Hong Kong Amateur Open, also shot a two-under 70 but closed seven strokes off Asistio at 212.

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BUSINESS

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RP posts highest BOP deficit in 4 years

IN THIS ISSUE
- Asean lays groundwork for dev't of minerals sector /B2
- PSE unveils strategies to attract more firms /B6

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PHILIPPINES INCURRED A BALANCE OF PAYMENTS deficit of $482 million in September—the largest monthly foreign exchange shortfall seen in four years.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas yesterday reported that the country had posted a BOP deficit for the second straight month. But the shortfall in September was nearly nine times that of the August deficit, which stood at $54 million. The September figure was also bigger than the $85 mil...

PALOVERDE TOWER
DANSALAN GARDENS

In a low-density community like Paloverde Tower, everything is optimally laid-out to ensure that every unit gets fantastic views. Located only three blocks away from EDSA, Paloverde Tower affords you views of the Makati, Manila, and Ortigas skylines. With no other high-rise developments nearby to obstruct your view and a well thought-out unit mix and floor layout, each unit here naturally commands a spectacular, almost private, glimpse of the city.

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Asean lays groundwork for dev't of minerals sector

By Amy R. Remo

ASEAN MINISTERS HAVE ADOPTED the Manila Declaration, which is expected to strengthen the regional mining sector—seen to be a driving force in the establishment of the Asean Economic Community by 2015.

At the closing ceremony of the 2nd Asean Ministerial Meeting on Minerals (Ammin), Environment Secretary Lito Atienza said that the Manila Declaration has helped develop a "close attention and leadership to successful mining to not mere economics."

With the adoption of the Manila Declaration, the Asean ministers have expressed their common sentiment that the development of the responsible mining industries would shield member nations from the global financial meltdown, Atienza explained.

Members of the Chamber of Mines of the Philippines were also pleased with the results of the conferences, especially since the Asean ministers had "affirmed their unified support for the mining sector and minerals development," said chamber president Philip G. Romualdez.

With these developments, several more mining firms have announced plans to pursue mining projects in the Philippines, propping up investor confidence in the country.

Over the past four days alone, mining companies have disclosed over $6.5B plan in new investments in the Philippines, on top of the $11 billion that had been previously announced, Romualdez said.

He added that the Philippines would even find itself looking at a $15-billion investment level in just four years, slightly higher than the government's projection of a $12.6-billion investment inflow by 2013.

"So, pessimists. Our optimists are right. But the demand for minerals and mineral products will not slow down," Atienza said. "Our very own region and local consumption will support it."

According to interim documents, the policies detailed under the Manila Declaration will be implemented over the next two years.

One such policy called for the Asean countries to commit to the "continuous development and utilization of the minerals resources of Asean member states to enhance the sustainability of the resources and maximize the benefits to the community and the national economy, providing the necessary safety net and shield from global financial and economic meltdown."

Ministers have also agreed to "accelerate cooperation to work toward the facilitation and enhancement of trade and investments in minerals through harmonization of mineral policies, incentives and taxation, standardization of mineral resource information and systematized flow and exchange of resources and trade information."

Other policies include promoting a "platform for dialogue...to which the private sector and donor dialogue partners can more effectively and efficiently collaborate in mutually-beneficial, minerals cooperation activities in support of [the establishment] of the Asean Community, and fostering concerted cooperation and joint approaches to international and regional fora on minerals."

RP may expect $5B in new mining investments

RP posts highest BOP deficit in 4 years

From page B1

PHILEX MINING CORPORATION

NOTICE TO STOCKHOLDERS

PHILEX MINING CORPORATION (the "Company") had earlier announced the offer of FIRST PACIFIC COMPANY LIMITED (the "Investor") to purchase treasury shares of the Company representing about 20% of its total issued capital stock, at the price of P7.92 per share, or a total purchase price of more than P6.1 Billion.

In a letter dated October 6, 2008, the Social Security System ("SSS") demanded that "this block of shares should be offered first to the SSS, as an existing shareholder, so it can exercise its pre-emptive rights."

The Investor expressed concern in view of the issues raised by the SSS, valid or not, regarding its offer. Therefore, in order to address this concern, the Company has decided to offer to sell and/or issue shares of stock, consisting of treasury shares and primary shares, to all of its stockholders (including the SSS) on a pro-rata basis.

On October 16, 2008, the Company announced to the Philippine Stock Exchange that:

- The Company will offer 778,645,691 treasury shares (the "Offer Shares") to stockholders of record as of October 30, 2008 (the "Record Date") at the price of P7.92 per share. Stockholders shall be entitled to purchase one (1) Offer Share for every four (4) shares held as of Record Date.

- The offer period shall commence on Wednesday, November 5, 2008, and shall end on Wednesday, November 19, 2008.

- The Investor shall underwrite all the Offer Shares, and shall acquire all of the shares not taken up by the existing shareholders at P7.92 per share.

- The Company shall undertake a primary issuance of shares at a later date, and will make the announcements in a timely manner.

Stockholders will be receiving materials pertaining to the offer, including the forms to be filled up and the manner of payment. In addition, stockholders who are interested in the offer may contact the Company for more details through the following individuals:

Mr. Renato N. Migrillo
Vice President - Finance
Tel. No. 746-8755
Fax No. 631-9498
Email: rnm@philexmining.com.ph

Atty. Barbara Anne C. Migallos
Corporate Secretary
Tel. No. 899-2123
Fax No. 899-1833
Email: bcm@migallosunalaw.com

In order to fully explain the offer to the public, a press conference has been scheduled by the Company this afternoon (October 17, 2008, 2:30PM) at the EDSA Shangri-la Hotel (Garden Ballroom, 2nd Floor, Garden Wing) in Mandaluyong City. All interested parties, whether stockholders or not, including members of the media and stock analysts are welcome to attend.

BPI to sell ₱10B-₱15B in debt notes

To fund Ayalas' Philamlife bid

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE AYALA BANK OF THE PHILIPPINE Islands aims to raise as much as P15 billion from the domestic sale of debt notes qualifying as tier 2 or supplementary capital.

The fundraising is widely believed to be in preparation for the Ayalas' bid to acquire the country's largest and most profitable insurance, Philippine American Life and General Insurance Co.

It is "consistent with the proactive role of BPI in the financial services sector consolidation and in anticipation of possible acquisition opportunities," BPI corporate secretary Carlos Aquino disclosed to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday.

BPI's board approved the issuance of P10 billion to P15 billion peso-denominated subordinated notes, he said.

"This will allow the bank to effectively respond to any opportunity that may arise," Aquino said.

BPI chair Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala II could not say how much the Ayala group's interest in the local crown jewel of the Swiss-owned American financial giant, AIG.

Analysts said the "acquisition opportunity" referred to by the bank was an offer from the expected auction of Philamlife.

Jose Mari Larrazabal, head of research at stock brokerage Campos Lanuza & Co. Inc., estimated that BPI had about P1.13 billion in net cash and other liquid assets that could be used for the acquisition.

"The reported asking price is $1 billion (under the bank value), so the cash being raised by BPI alone falls short of the required amount. Given this, we assume that apart from internal cash, BPI will need to partner with another entity for such an acquisition," Larrazabal said.

"Doing so is above and outside the balance sheet of the company, which would be against its conservative business philosophy, even assuming that AIG would agree to sell at above $1-billion," he added.

Alfred Ty, head of research at CLSA Securities Philippines, said the fundraising should put BPI in a good position to make an acquisition.

"BPI can team up with its sub-unit partners Ayala Corp. and SM (Development Bank of Singapore)," Ty said.

But Lazcano said it was uncertain whether BPI could count on its foreign strategic investor, DBS, in bidding for Philamlife.

"We question whether DBS would like to increase its exposure to the Philippines given its previous disappointments and to the insurance business, which we do not think is a core business of the bank," Lazcano said.

"BPI may have to look elsewhere for partners such as Japan," he said.

Based on data from the insurance commission, Philamlife's flagship life insurance business alone has P120 billion in assets and a net worth of P21.4 billion as of end-2007.

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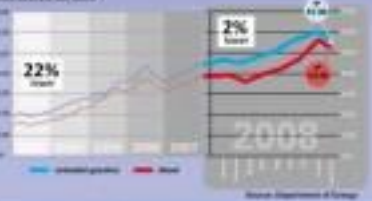

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SMBI 9-mo profit up 22.8%

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Larson

15-centavo per share cash dividend OKd

SAN MIGUEL BREWERY INC., THE beer-making unit of conglomerate San Miguel Corp., said its net income in the first nine months of the year rose by 22.8 percent to P7 billion from year-ago level.

Also, the company said its board had approved a cash dividend of 15 centavos per share, payable on Nov. 12 to shareholders on record as of Oct. 31.

The company attributes the profit growth to, among others, the 6-percent increase in sales volume during the period.

Despite rising inflation and the economic slowdown, SMBI's sales revenue rose 10 percent to P35.2 billion. Operating income also grew by 22.5 percent to P13.8 billion, the company said in a disclosure to the stock exchange.

SMBI said the strong results was due to rising consumption, which was attributed to the increased availability of flagship brand San Miguel Pale Pilsen in this year's 320-day October beer celebration.

New on its fourth year, Red Horse Mucklelubar continues to struggle on the brands' following among younger-crazy drinkers.

In August, SMBI launched San Miguel Premium All-Malt Beer, a full-flavored beer with a smooth balanced bitterness. Also launched recently was a premium edition San Miguel Oktoberfest Brew.

Consumer acceptance has been strong particularly for All-Malt Premium. Plans are underway to extend the reach of the product beyond the metropolitan area.

Republic of the Philippines
COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS
Diliman, Quezon City
Tel. No. 920 - 1500

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID PROCUREMENT OF SERVICE VEHICLES

1. The Commission on Human Rights (CHR) through the General Appropriation Act (GAA) intends to apply the amount of FOUR MILLION & FIVE HUNDRED THOUSAND PESOS (P4.5M) to cover items as follows:

LOT No.	QUANTITY	ITEM DESCRIPTION	ABC
1	4 - units	Four door sedan 4-cylinder gasoline engine fuel injection 1.3 liters vs. 1.6 liters engine displacement 4 or 5 speed manual transmission or auto-matic transmission Factory air-conditioning Power steering, Power windows Pull-push AM-FM stereo with CD player Front disc brakes Keyless remote entry Warranty of 3Y and three (3) years/CTO registration	P 1,560,000.00
2	1 - unit	Diesel or the four (4) cylinder diesel engine 2,400 cc-2,800 cc engine displacement (2.4 - 2.8 liter diesel engine) 4 or 5 speed manual transmission Power steering Power windows Pull-push AM-FM radio with cassette or CD player (depot- optional) Front disc w shock absorber Passenger capacity: 10-11 passengers including driver Insurance of 3RT and three (3) years CTO registration	P 1,140,000.00
TOTAL ABC			P 4,500,000.00

Being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC); no payments under the contract for the Procurement of Service Vehicles. Bids received in excess of this ABC shall be automatically rejected at the Bid opening.

2. Interested Bidders may obtain a complete set of Bidding Documents starting October 14, 2008, upon payment of a non-refundable fee in the amount of One Thousand Pesos (P1,000.00) for Lot 1 and Five Hundred Pesos (P500.00) for Lot 2, to the Finance and Management Office (FMO) CHR Office, 3/F Complex, Commonwealth Ave., Diliman, Quezon City.

3. The Commission on Human Rights will hold a Pre-bid Conference open to all interested parties on October 28, 2008, 2:00pm, at CHR Conference Room.

4. Deadline for the submission of Bids for Lot 1 shall be on November 5, and Lot 2 shall be November 6, 2008, 10:00 am at the FMO Office, 3rd Floor, CHR Office, U.P. Complex, Diliman, Quezon City immediately after the deadline, bids will be opened in the presence of the bidders' representatives who choose to attend.

5. The Bids and Awards Committee of the Commission on Human Rights reserves the right to reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all bids at any time prior to contract award without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or Bidders.

(Sgd.) HTTP://ACQUIRLINE.G.VELORIA.BE.RA
Chairman - Bids and Awards Committee
COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS
SHAC Building, UP Compound
Commonwealth Ave., Diliman
Quezon City

UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES DILIMAN

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The University of the Philippines Diliman, through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites consultants to apply for eligibility and shortlisting and if found eligible and shortlisted, to bid for the hereunder project:

Name of Contract	:	Construction Management Services for the Reconstruction of the Proposed MMRE Building
Location	:	University of the Philippines Diliman
Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC)	:	PhP 3,037,940.00
Contract Duration	:	360 calendar days (construction phase)

The list of minimum requirements is indicated in the Eligibility Form. Eligibility of prospective bidders shall be checked using non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Shortlisting of eligible consultants will be done based on the following criteria: experience of the consultant, qualification of personnel and current workload. Only five (5) eligible bidders shall make up the shortlist. The evaluation procedure to be adopted shall be: Quality-Cost Based Evaluation/Selection (QCBE/QCBS). The University of the Philippines shall indicate the weights to be allocated for the Technical and Financial Proposals. The criteria and rating system for the evaluation of bids shall be provided in the Instructions to Bidders.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference(s), Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

The schedule of activities is as follows:

	BAC Activities	Schedule
1.	Receipt from prospective bidders of Letters of Intent (LOI)	Until 24 October 2008
2.	Period of Issuance of Eligibility Forms	Until 24 October 2008
3.	Deadline for Submission of Eligibility Requirements	30 October 2008, 9:00 a.m.
4.	Notice of Results of Eligibility Check / Short Listing	03 November 2008
5.	Issuance of Terms of Reference and Bid Documents	12-19 November 2008
6.	Pre-bid Conference	20 November 2008, 10:00 a.m.
7.	Receipt of Technical and Financial Proposals	4 December 2008, 9:30 a.m.
8.	Opening of Technical Proposals	4 December 2008, 10:00 a.m.
9.	Opening of Financial Proposals	11 December 2008, 10:00 a.m.

The Eligibility Screening Form will be available at the Office of the Campus Architect (OCA), Coral Building, cor. Delos Reyes and Lakandula Streets, University of the Philippines, Diliman, Quezon City, upon submission of a Letter of Intent, and upon payment of a non-refundable amount of PHP 500.00 to the UP Cashier. Submission and results of eligibility as well as the Pre-bid Conference, shall be at the same office. Bid Documents will be available only to shortlisted bidders upon payment of a non-refundable amount to the UP Cashier.

The University of the Philippines assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of their bids.

(Sgd.) MARY DELIA G. TOMACRUZ
BAC Chairman

MWC raising bond offer

MANILA WATER CO. Inc., the utility arm of Ayala Corp., is planning to increase its bond offering to P4 billion from P3 billion.

"Both institutional and retail investors came in strong despite shaky global markets. Our feedback is that our high credit rating and stable revenue main investors view the offering is very secure issue," ADVC chief finance officer Sherisa Nuesa told the Inquirer.

Manila Water started this week a P3-billion bond offering, which may rise if the efforts of European central banks to infuse $3 trillion into banks to shield them from the global turmoil.

"The concerted effort of foreign governments helps global markets, and it should improve the credit situation in the Philippines. We remain confident that the local banking system remains quite strong and stable since it was not exposed to the subprime problem that much," Nuesa said.

Manila Water's P3 billion worth of bonds carry a coupon rate of 8.25 percent, which is quite competitive with the current benchmark treasury fixed bond rate of 7.75 percent.

The offer period, which started on Monday, ends today.

"Although the whole market is quite selective, domestic banks are quite liquid, We think there is demand not only from institutional investors but also from retail investors," Nuesa said.

Manila Water also said it was enjoying the strong support of multilateral banking institutions, such as the World Bank, IFC, European Investment Bank and OPIC (Germany) which are all current lenders of the company.

"Together with existing money from facilities and internally generated cash, proceeds of the bond offering will cover most of the company's capital investment requirements in the East Zone operations area for the remaining months of 2008 up to 2009," Manila Water is committing P17 billion for the next five years of P7 to P8 billion every year for its capital requirements. Sherisa B. Lacson

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

As of October 16, 2008

STOCK	CLOSE	CHANGE	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	VOLUME
A						
ABS	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
ABA	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
ABC	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
ABD	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
ABE	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
ABF	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
ABG	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
ABH	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
ABI	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
ABJ	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
ABK	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
ABL	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
ABM	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
ABN	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
ABO	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
ABP	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
ABQ	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
ABR	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
ABS	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
ABT	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
ABU	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
ABV	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
ABW	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
ABX	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
ABY	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
ABZ	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
B						
BBA	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
BBB	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
BBC	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
BBD	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
BBE	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
BBF	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
BBG	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
BBH	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
BBI	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
BBJ	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
BBK	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
BBL	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
BBM	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
BBN	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
BBO	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
BBP	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
BBQ	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
BBR	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
BBS	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
BBT	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
BBU	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
BBV	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
BBW	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
BBX	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
BBY	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
BBZ	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
C						
CCA	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
CCB	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
CCC	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
CCD	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
CCE	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
CCF	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
CCG	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
CCH	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
CCI	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
CCJ	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
CCK	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
CCL	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
CCM	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
CCN	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
CCO	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
CCP	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
CCQ	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
CCR	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
CCS	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
CCT	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
CCU	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
CCV	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
CCW	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
CCX	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
CCY	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
CCZ	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
D						
DDA	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
DDB	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
DDC	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
DDD	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
DDE	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
DDF	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
DDG	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
DDH	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
DDI	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
DDJ	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
DDK	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
DDL	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
DDM	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
DDN	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
DDO	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
DDP	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
DDQ	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
DDR	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
DDS	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
DDT	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
DDU	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
DDV	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
DDW	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
DDX	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
DDY	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
DDZ	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
E						
EEA	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
EEB	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
EEC	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
EED	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
EEE	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
EEF	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
EEG	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
EEH	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
EEI	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
EEJ	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
EEK	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
EEL	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
EEM	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
EEN	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
EEO	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
EEP	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
EEQ	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
EER	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
EES	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
EET	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
EEU	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
EEV	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
EEW	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
EEX	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
EEY	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
EEZ	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
F						
FFA	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
FFB	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
FFC	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
FFD	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
FFE	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
FFF	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
FFG	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
FFH	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
FFI	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
FFJ	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
FFK	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
FFL	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
FFM	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
FFN	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
FFO	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
FFP	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
FFQ	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
FFR	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
FFS	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
FFT	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
FFU	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
FFV	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
FFW	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
FFX	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
FFY	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
FFZ	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
G						
GGA	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
GGB	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
GGC	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
GGD	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
GGE	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
GGF	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
GGG	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
GGH	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
GGI	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
GGJ	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
GGK	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
GGL	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
GGM	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
GGN	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
GGO	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
GGP	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
GGQ	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
GGR	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
GGS	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
GGT	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
GGU	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
GGV	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
GGW	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
GGX	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
GGY	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
GGZ	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
H						
HHA	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
HHB	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
HHC	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
HHD	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
HHE	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
HHF	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
HHG	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
HHH	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
HHI	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
HHJ	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
HHK	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
HHL	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
HHM	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
HHN	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
HHO	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
HHP	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
HHQ	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
HHR	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
HHS	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
HHT	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
HHU	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
HHV	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
HHW	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
HHX	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
HHY	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
HHZ	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
I						
IIA	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
IIB	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
IIC	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
IID	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
IIE	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
IIF	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
IIG	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
IIH	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
III	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
IIJ	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
IIK	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
IIL	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
IIM	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
IIN	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
IIO	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
IIP	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
IIQ	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
IIR	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
IIS	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
IIT	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
IIU	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
IIV	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
IIW	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
IIX	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
IIY	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
IIZ	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
J						
JJA	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
JJB	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
JJC	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
JJD	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
JJE	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
JJF	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
JJG	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
JJH	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
JJI	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
JJJ	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
JJK	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
JJL	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
JJM	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
JJN	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
JJO	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
JJP	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
JJQ	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
JJR	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
JJS	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
JJT	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
JJU	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
JJV	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
JJW	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
JJX	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
JJY	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
JJZ	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
K						
KKA	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
KKB	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
KKC	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
KKD	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
KKE	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
KKF	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
KKG	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
KKH	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
KKI	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
KKJ	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
KKK	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
KKL	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
KKM	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
KKN	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
KKO	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
KKP	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
KKQ	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
KKR	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
KKS	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
KKT	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
KKU	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
KKV	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
KKW	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
KKX	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
KKY	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
KKZ	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
L						
LLA	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
LLB	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
LLC	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
LLD	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
LLE	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
LLF	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
LLG	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
LLH	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
LLI	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
LLJ	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
LLK	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
LLL	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
LLM	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
LLN	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
LLO	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
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LLQ	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
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LLS	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
LLT	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
LLU	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
LLV	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
LLW	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
LLX	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
LLY	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
LLZ	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
M						
MMA	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
MMB	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
MMC	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
MMD	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
MME	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
MMF	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
MMG	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
MMH	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
MMI	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
MMJ	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75	1,000
MMK	0.75		0.75	0.75	0.75

BPO sector remains on growth path, BPAP says

AUSTRALIAN CALL CENTER SOLUTIONS company Call Design has opened shop in the Philippines and says it will push about 30,000 outsourced jobs around the country over the next four years.

This affirms the Business Process Association of the Philippines' (BPAP) view that the IT-BPO industry in the Philippines will continue to grow despite the global turmoil in the financial and equities markets.

"The economy ran hottest in the Philippines and our company are in the right place at the right time. This is because the global financial crisis gives the country more opportunities as international companies seek to increase efficiency without raising cost. A boom has yet to come over the next three years as our company's solutions help enhance Philippine agents' efficiency," said Call Design managing director Mike Stanton at a briefing in Makati City.

"The Philippines is a logical choice for us and for others because it is the top three choices for outsourcing worldwide. With contact center seats in the Philippines costing five or six times cheaper than in the US, and with the superior language skills found here compared to India or China, the Philippines has an advantage," said Call Design director Sara Redman.

From one telephone last month, Call Design (Philippines) has recruited six others, four of them consultants handling contact center accounts.

Besides its new recruitment drive, Call Design (Philippines) country manager Jaime Refrael Sese said the Australian company is helping bring contact center jobs to the Philippines.

"We have four existing clients with 15,000 seats globally and 10 percent of those would be moved to the Philippines over a two-year period. We are hoping to build that movement to 50,000 seats over three years and we will support the Philippine-based companies who will manage those seats from here," said Sese.

Separately, BPAP said it remained bullish on the Philippine outsourcing industry's prospects.

BPAP CEO Oscar Salazo said that in the short term, some of the local IT-BPO industry's current clients may reassess their strategies, but that he expects the underlying trend of increased outsourcing to continue.

Currently, the total pie for outsourcing is big...around $450 billion...a significant part of which remains largely untapped. Salazo said the IT-BPO industry currently serves many industries like telecommunications, high-technology, power, retail, airline, and will some target other "untapped industries."

Salazo added that the financial services sector, estimated to be only about 10-15 percent of the total outsourcing addressable market of $350 billion by 2010, is only one of the many key sectors targeted by the local IT-BPO industry. — Rica T. Oliveros

Group bucks plan to scrap cement tariff

AN ADVOCACY AND RESEARCH GROUP yesterday expressed concerns over a Department of Trade and Industry proposal to remove the 5-percent import tariff on cement.

The Tariff Commission has been tasked to draft the proposal on this.

"Opening the floodgates for cheap and low-quality imported cement would result in the economic dislocation of thousands of Filipino families who depend on the cement industry for their livelihood," said Jaeyre Rafael de la Torre of the Center for Organizational Studies and Advocacy (Cosa).

"We have seen the ill-effects of 'free market' policies, such as the current Chinese milk issue and the rice crisis that hit the country earlier," De la Torre added.

He said many industries had become non-viable and had subsequently closed shop, leaving Filipino consumers to the mercy of foreign companies who could sacrifice quality for profit.

"We should be self-sufficient in basic commodities such as food products, as well as in strategic industries like cement. We cannot rely on other countries for food and shelter," Cosa's chief advocate said.

Economic recession or uncontrolled importation could disrupt construction projects due to logistical delays, poor quality with safety risk and wild price fluctuations as we saw in the case of imported rice, he said.

"We already have one of the lowest tariff rates for cement in Asia at 5 percent for most preferred nations. The cement tariffs in Malaysia and Vietnam are 30 percent and 40 percent, respectively," he is here said.

RP up a notch in IT competitiveness

By Rica T. Oliveros

Group cites weakness in telco infrastructure

THE PHILIPPINES SLIGHTLY has improved its ranking in the second edition of the IT Competitiveness Index spearheaded by the Business Software Alliance (BSA).

The index is an assessment of the IT environments of 66 countries and indicates the extent to which the economies enable the IT sector to grow.

As with the first edition of the study, the Philippines ranked tenth in Asia Pacific, moving up a notch from the previous year, but remained 47th overall.

BSA vice president and regional director for Asia Pacific Jeffrey Hunker said separately that the Philippines performed strongest in providing a favorable business environment, support for the IT industry and human capital.

However, it lacks legislation that will ensure at least minimal protection to intellectual property rights against such things as cybercrime and spam. There was also a noted weakness in the IT and telecommunications infrastructure, as well as innovation research.

The Economist Intelligence Unit, which undertook the study for BSA, recommended that the Philippine government expand the talent pool for IT industries, support broadband growth, and initiate laws banning unfounded...

The multiple group also highlighted the need for the Philippine government to pass laws that would improve confidence in e-commerce, as well as encourage companies to pursue significant gains in research and development.

"In fact, now more than ever, governments should really think about how to improve their competitiveness to attract more of the investors in this environment," he said.

Expectedly, the Philippines' mobile communications and connecting infrastructure stood out as growth drivers, enabling the country to cope with global challenges despite inadequacies in other areas.

Broadband penetration is very low at 1.3 to a 100, but overall Internet usage was set to be high. Internet users could reach 25.5 million by end-2008 and 50 million by 2013, the study said.

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PSE unveils strategies to attract more firms

By Amy R. Remo

AS MORE MINING FIRMS LIST ON THE local bourse, the Philippine Stock Exchange has also instituted several reforms and strategic programs to protect both the investors and companies.

In his presentation at the 8th Asia Pacific Mining Conference and Exhibition, PSE chief operating officer Hoy Joseph M. Batlok said the local bourse's programs are encapsulated under "Level Up."

"Level Up" stands for Giving more companies and securities, Expanding the investor base, Valuing and enhancing corporate governance standards, Enhancing shareholder value, Launching new products and services, Upgrading readers infrastructure and human resources, and Partnering with government and other stakeholders.

The PSE hopes that with "Level Up", it can get more mining companies to list on the exchange.

Batlok said there are currently 15 listed mining firms.

As of Sept. this year, market capitalization of mining firms dropped by 22.6 percent to 994.3 billion from its year-ago level of P189.6 billion due to the fears of a global recession.

Meanwhile, value turnover of mining companies at the bourse declined by 47.4 percent to P20.91 billion in the first nine months of the year from its year-ago level of P60.29 billion.

One of the ways by which PSE hopes to entice mining firms is the liberalization of the listing rules for mining companies, such that companies that are still in the exploration stage may be allowed to sell shares to the public.

Other programs that the PSE has undertaken under the Level Up strategy included the signing of agreements with Board of Investments to list BOI-registered companies and with Bureau of Internal Revenue for fast priority audit for newly listed firms.

According to Batlok, the local bourse has also begun conducting investor awareness and education programs, which include exchange visits, short courses on stock market investments, PSE-certified securities specialist courses, and even an overseas Filipino investor program.

To further protect consumers, the PSE has implemented tighter disclosure rules. The most recent program was the adoption of the Philippine Mineral Reporting Code.

The PMRC, which was implemented on up last month, provides minimum standards, recommendations and guidelines for public reporting of exploration results, mineral resources and ore reserves.

The Code is a "fitting requirement" which can provide the public and investors more accurate information on the "actual" resources and reserves of mining companies.

SUVs Sales Overcome Fuel Cost Spike

Mitsubishi Montero Sport grabs sizeable share in compact and midsize SUVs in September

Sport utility vehicles or SUVs became popular in the early 90's as a status symbol. Since then there were a lot of SUVs introduced in the market filling every budget, demographic and lifestyle. At most shows journalist, executives, and car enthusiasts spend most of their time in lineups around the many SUVs on display. Almost everyone dreams of owning an SUV as it gives prestige and a statement of lifestyle and fulfillment.

However when fuel prices peaked during the start of the third quarter this year, vehicle sales in most markets particularly in the United States dropped significantly, to which SUV sales was primarily affected as people switched from gas guzzler SUVs to more fuel efficient vehicles and hybrids. In contrast, soaring fuel cost did not put the brakes on increasing SUV sales in the Philippines. September year-to-date figures from the Chamber of Automotive Manufacturers of the Philippines (CAMPI) and Truck Manufacturers Association (TMA) show that total SUVs sold accounted for 36,481 units. Furthermore, compact and midsize SUVs continue to dominate sales with 80% against large size SUVs.

Mitsubishi Motors Philippines' Rohan Dytiancquin, Assistant Vice-president for Marketing Services commented that "I believe that SUVs in our market remain to be relevant unlike in the U.S. since most of the SUVs available locally are powered by fuel efficient gasoline and diesel engines. In addition, SUVs in our market continue to be practical given its higher stance which enables it to easily maneuver bad roads and also pass through flooded roads during the rainy season"

Mitsubishi Motors Philippines continues to achieve excellent sales in SUV. This September, MMPC has remarkably sold a total of 479 units of Mitsubishi Outlander and Montero Sport putting it at the top the compact and midsize SUV segment. MMPC continuously leads the market with its SUV lineup that truly exudes class, sportiness and power. The Mitsubishi Outlander, Endeavor, Pajero, and the recently launched Montero Sport continue to boost sales growth.

The Mitsubishi Outlander, a crossover SUV, receives exclusive praises in reviews for its engine's 16 and 4 in line MIVEC engine as well as its early youth-ful design and sporty handling. Mitsubishi Motors has set this SUV apart from its competitors with distinctive styling and sporty character.

Though very fresh in the market, the Montero Sport instantly became the most desired midsize SUV in the market today. The Montero Sport sports unique contemporary styling and features uncompromised performance with its 2.5 Direct Injection-Diesel common rail intercooled turbocharged engine matched to Mitsubishi's renowned Super Select four wheel drive system. In addition, Montero Sport customers have also expressed admiration on the luxurious interior environment ease and more importantly its excellent riding comfort.

San Miguel plans to bid for stakes in Petron, PNOC-EC

Food and beverage giant seeks opportunities outside its core business

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lazaro

SAN MIGUEL CORP. IS EXPECTED to bid for the shares of two major energy companies that will be auctioned by the government.

These are the state's 40 percent interest in oil refiner Petron Corp. and 40-percent stake in PNOC Exploration Corp., the oil and gas exploration arm of Philippine National Oil Co.

"Yes, it's a good investment," said San Miguel vice chairman Ang referring to the Petron stake.

Ang said SMC might bid for Petron on its own. He also reiterated the conglomerate's interest in PNOC-EC.

Bloomberg has reported that SMC's bid for Petron would be part of a strategy to acquire assets as prices decline amid a global economic slowdown.

The government aims to sell its 40-percent stake in Petron, which is held by PNOC, for P6.82 per share or P28.7 billion for the entire 3.75 billion shares.

In line with a shareholders agreement with PNOC, Leandro Emil Atlantic Investment Management Ltd. was given 60 days upon the receipt of the notice to exercise its right of first offer or preemptive right over the government's Petron stake. Atlantic, through Netherlands-based SEA Refinery Holdings BV, owns 30.127 percent of Petron.

In the meantime, SMC plans to acquire the state's 40-percent stake in PNOC Exploration Corp., as it continues to pursue new sources of growth outside its core food and beverage business.

"That's a good mix. It's the concern power of PNOC because it owns gas and oil fields," Ang said.

He said SMC would likely participate in the bidding for the stake should the government push through with a planned sale this year.

The government has announced its plan to sell the PNOC-EC stake, which investment banks widely expect to take place before the end of the year.

Established in 1976, PNOC-EC has a 33-percent share in the Malampaya gas field in Palawan.

SMC earlier announced plans to invest about $750 million, equivalent to a mark of its assets, in new businesses such as power generation and transmission, mining and infrastructure.

New economic order

BY KARL MARX MERK ALIVE

today, he probably would be happy about the recent events in the United States and Europe.

In an effort to prevent a global financial crisis, the governments of developed economies have adopted measures that somehow reinforce or Marx's vision of an ideal social order.

The textbook principles on free enterprise or letting market forces decide the fate of business activities have been (temporarily) set aside by traditional advocates of laissez faire in the name of economic salvation.

It's now okay for public money to be used to acquire stocks in banks that have serious liquidity problems.

Financial or investment deals that have soured were for one reason or another can gain a new lease in life by selling them to the government.

Bank depositors, including banks that lend to each other, need not worry about losing their money—the government will guarantee their repayment.

Accountability and suffering the consequences of bad business decisions are no longer in.

Worse, the state will come to be a central referee in trade and commerce. It's going to be an active, if not major, participant in the dictates of economic life.

State control

The socialist concept that government control of the economy is essential for a just and well-ordered society has, finally, gained grudging acceptance from its critics.

In Marx's book, socialism is the final step towards the workers' (or proletariat's) control of the social, economic and political forces of the state.

Although the stock markets in G-7 countries appear to have recovered, it's too early to say whether the steps taken by their governments will bring about the desired results.

Later, after the market has settled down, historians will gather to analyze with detailed objectivity the elements that gave rise to the global financial mess.

This early, however, there is some difficulty in coming up with an apt description to the unexpected order that is slowly evolving from the rubble of the US-led financial crisis.

Except probably for France which has a socialist history, the other governments involved in the bailout effort do not seem disposed to the idea of having their economies described as "socialist," "capitalist-socialist" or any name that has a similar ring.

"It do so could be misperceived as an implied admission of the failure of the principles of free enterprise that have been touted with having superiority as the formula for the economic success of their countries.

Name game

So how should we label the present economic order?

A columnist of Newsweek, Anatol Kaletsky, last week gave some suggestions on what name to give to this economic phenomenon.

Perhaps "corporatism" or the merger of state and corporate power? Under this system, which was practiced by fascist Italy during the reign of Benito Mussolini, the country's largest industries function as adjuncts of the regime.

The contemporary variations of this set-up, as adopted by some Asian and Latin American countries, were called crony capitalism, plutocracy and kleptocracy.

Its latest version is "authoritarian capitalism," the description given to the economic policies adopted by Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin, Donald Jacobus in the Philippine Star columnist, circa mental lens.)

The system may also be called a "mixed economy," similar to what the US had during the time of President Franklin Roosevelt, characterized by massive infrastructure projects and social welfare programs that put more money in circulation.

But the problem is, to paraphrase Wolfberg, the principles and standards used in these systems will not be applied to the present situation. Private enterprise will continue to play a significant, although diminished role, in managing the financial order.

Rules

So why not call it "regulatory capitalism"?

The name may be fitting since tough capital requirements are expected to be universally enforced by the authorities to prevent the financial meltdown from happening again.

Better still, "life jacket capitalism."

Under the new system, monetary regulators will use merely "ordinary seat-belt and helmet laws for the financial sector." They have to anticipate market misjudgments that could result in system-wide failure in the future.

They have to be pro-active and able to read the tea leaves with practically divine precision.

To accomplish this mandate, the economic guardians will need awesome powers. And with the grant of authority comes the responsibility to use the hefeast all the time for events that could destabilize the international economic system.

Financial analysts and investigators are expected to argue until they turn blue over the politically correct description of the present economic system.

For the man on the street, however, the name doesn't matter. As long as he and his family are able to meet the basic necessities of life, here the opinion should be called to the least of his worries.

(For feedback, please write us <spotlight.sa@inquirer.com.ph>.)

EDC acquires 60% of First Gen subsidiary

By Abigail L. Ho

LOPEZ-OWNED PHOT (EDC) Corp. has sold 60 percent of subsidiary First Gen Hydro Power Corp. to affiliate Energy Development Corp. for P330 million.

In a statement issued yesterday, EDC said its purchase of the controlling stake in FGHPC gave it effective control over the 112-megawatt (MW) Pantabangan-Masiway hydropower facilities in Nueva Ecija, which the First Gen subsidiary was operating.

For the transaction, which the two firms hoped to close before the end of the year, Petnet-Inquirer and Amelito served as independent financial advisers. Macquarie Capital (Singapore) Pte Ltd. as financial advisor for EDC and JP Morgan (SEA) Ltd. as financial advisor for First Gen.

Overseeing the transaction were EDC independent directors Alvaro Nova A., Eric Stein and Nonito Tiotuico. They voted unanimously for the approval of the deal.

Corollary to the transaction, First Gen will subscribe to preferred shares of FGHPC. These shares will pay dividends based on FGHPC's earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization (Ebitda) within seven years a five-year period.

EDC's move into hydropower through the FGHPC stake acquisition is in line with the company's thrust to maximize the development and use of renewable energy resources in the country.

EDC is currently the country's top producer of geothermal power, with 1,208 megawatts (MW) of installed capacity, or 60 percent of the 1,905-MW total.

PRULINK
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Investments of Variable Life Insurance Contracts	Current Week (October 14, 2008)	Last Week (October 7, 2008)
Bond Fund - Peso	1.9930	1.9930
Managed Fund - Peso	1.7736	1.8017
Growth Fund - Peso	1.2847	1.3313
Equity Fund - Peso	0.9150	0.9643
Bond Fund - US Dollar	1.1758	1.1758

PSBank
US Dollar
TIME DEPOSIT

	$1,000 to 9,999	$10,000 to 49,999	$50,000 to 99,999	$100,000 and up
1 month	2.000%	2.500%	2.750%	3.000%
2 months	2.000%	2.500%	2.750%	3.000%
3 months	2.000%	2.500%	2.750%	3.000%

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Rural women in climate change and disaster risk reduction

By Brenda M. Culaban

A FEW DAYS FROM NOW, FROM OCT. 19 to 22, the biggest international gathering on gender in climate change and disaster risk reduction (DRR) will convene at Bonn Thaer Hotel in Makati City.

It is the first time that major international bodies will unite on this important topic. Coordinated by the Center for Asia Pacific Women in Politics (Capwip) led by Dr. Jurg Sook Rhie, the participating groups include the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR), Women's Environment and Development Organization (Wedo), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), United Nations Fund for Women (Unifem), Asian Development Bank (ADB), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), International Union for Conservation (IUCN) and the Global Gender Climate Alliance (GGCA).

So why is this of special importance to our rural women?

Background

Last December 2007, Alyssum Agribusiness noted that there was not one single rural woman representative with the Philippine delegation that went to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) on Bali, Indonesia.

But Alyssum then got the endorsement of the Department of Agriculture and Environment and Natural Resources for one of its leaders to be in this delegation. She was Betsy Bilden, Agrimark Board Member and Capwip's director of international operations.

On her return, Bilden reported that she was aghast: "The gender issue was nowhere on the climate change agenda!" Capwip then worked double time with Dr. Peng Mitlipa of UNISDR and their organizing partners to convene this through the Third Global Congress of Women in Politics and Governance.

The Congress' purpose is to help formulate "gender responsive legislation and programs related to gender in climate change and disaster risk reduction." Their excellent work has paid off—200 premiere parliamentarians, key government officials, and well-known environment scientists from 60 countries are participating in this conference.

Women in agriculture

According to a Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) publication, global warming has a tremendous impact on the estimated 1.6 billion rural people who depend on small-scale resource-poor farming in developing countries.

It states: "The profound effects of climate change in agriculture, combined with the low resiliency and high vulnerability of the population to shocks, could severely alter their ability to manage natural resources, affecting their livelihoods, food security and well being. At risk are their jobs, their homes, and their access to basic resources, including food and water."

Women play a very important role in agriculture. They plant, produce, process and prepare most of the world's food. Women are responsible for about 70 percent of total home food production in Sub-Saharan Africa, 65 percent in Asia and 45 percent in Latin America.

Recognizing the link between climate change and rural women, Kellie Bruner wrote: "Logically, human beings of both sexes should react in much the same way to environmental threats, and any differences in the effect of disasters between the sexes should be fairly small."

I was appalled at what it showed. More women die than men as the direct and indirect result of natural disasters. Ninety percent of the 140,000 victims of the 1991 Bangladesh cyclone disasters were women ... and the 2004 tsunami killed three to four women for each man."

Dr. Ayse Dadli, director of the Integrated Research and Action for Development (Ired), explains why women are more vulnerable than men, specially in rural areas: "They are more prone to the adverse impacts than disaster change. Their limited adaptive capacities arise from prevailing social inequalities and ascribed social and economic roles that sensitive itself to differences in property rights, access to information, lack of employment, and unequal access to resources. Further, changes in the climate usually impact on sectors that are traditionally associated with women, such as paddy cultivation, cotton and tea plantations, and fishing. This means increased hardship for women."

Recommendation for Global Congress

Not only is this Congress successfully bringing together for the first time the major international organizations on the subject of gender in climate change, its speakers are also among the most influential global leaders in this area.

Among them are Dr. Supachai Panitchpakdi, UNCTAD secretary general and former WTO director general; Dr. Salvano Briceno, UNISDR director; Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Dr. Wangari Mota Maathai, founder of the Kenya Greenbelt Movement; Lorena Aguilar of IUCN; Rebecca Pearl of GGCA and Cara Owens of Wedo.

With such a gathering of internationally respected organizations and prominent personalities, it is expected that the Congress' participants will formulate creative and effective proposals to mainstream gender in climate change, specially where rural women are concerned. They can then take these proposals back to their respective constituents for concerted national, and even worldwide, implementation.

After this, Congress, wood and other women literature they see the most affected will hopefully participate in all future climate change organizations and directions in their respective countries.

(The author is chair of Agrimarck, former secretary for presidential flagship programs and projects, and former undersecretary for Agriculture, and Trade and Industry. For inquiries and suggestions, e-mail agrimarkph@yahoo.com or cculaban@ED.ph#12121)

COMMENTARY

Rural banks tally win vs BSP

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE COURT OF APPEALS (CA) has lost the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas' bid to stop Banco Rosario Inc. (Banco) from taking control of certain rural banks affiliated with the controversial Legacy group until it discloses to these banks its reports on the alleged capital deficiency.

In a decision issued Sept. 28 by Associate Justice Apolinario Bruselas Jr., the CA's special 8th division ruled in favor of the rural banks, which had sought an injunction against the BSP after the monetary authority refused to furnish the rural banks a copy of the report of examination (ROE) that it submitted to the policymaking Monetary Board.

The CA ruling refuted the BSP's arguments that the rural banks should not be given copies of the ROE ahead of submission to the board because the report should remain confidential to protect the interests of the depositors and prevent the seizure of the controlled banks from dissipating the assets.

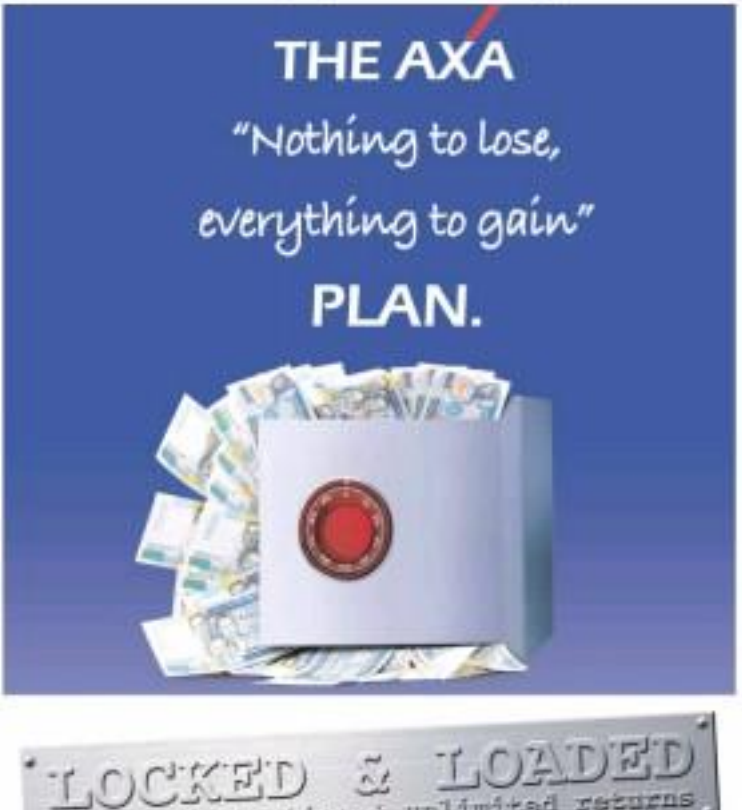
"One view is that the alleged closure, liquidity of the BOE may not be invoked against the respondent banks as it should not prevail over the principle of transparency, which is an essential ingredient of fairness and fair play and an effective antidote as well to the opportunity for corruption," the ruling said.

The case involved 30 rural banks—Rural Bank of Bonbonan, Rural Bank of San Jose (Batangas), Rural Bank of Calatagan (Batangas) or Dynamic Rural Bank, Rural Bank of Magkaisa ng Bank of East Asia, Philippine Rural Bank, Philippine Countryside Rural Bank, Rural Bank of Carmen (Cebu), Rural Bank of Kauayan (Leyte) or First Interstate Bank, Rural Bank of DARICI, and San Pablo City Development Bank—which sought the help of the courts after the BSP refused to provide them a copy of the ROE.

The report would inform them of the capital infusion required by the BSP/Banco enabling them to comply.

The BSP conducted separate examinations of the books of the 30 rural banks in September 2007. Then in January and February this year, it required the banks to raise capital to cover deficiencies even after the banks said that none of them had received the ROE.

Regulator told to produce copy of capital report



BUSINESS Friday

E-mail: business@inquirer.com.ph
Website: www.inquirer.net/business
Business Features Editor Margie Quiogue-Espino

Making a 150-year-old bank more market oriented

BPI's modern, streamlined branch interiors and vibrant and bold signages illustrate the bank's dynamism.

By Margie Quiogue-Espino

KNOWN MORE FOR ITS financial stability rather than its excellent service, the country's oldest bank has been quietly undergoing a makeover—inside and out.

Two years ago, it adopted a new tagline—"We'll take you further"—a change from its decades-old tagline of "A tradition of leadership." Then this year, it started refurbishing its over-600 branches.

ECAMPO

But the real change is in the bank's focus—shifting from simple operations to sales and marketing, which includes relationship management and customer service.

BPI had to make the shift because as 60% VP for the cards issuing division Maria Cristina L. Oa points out, the market has changed.

"We now have to be sales and marketing oriented. It's called for by the times influenced largely by media where information is now at the fingertips," Oa says.

But fundamentals remain the same, such as financial prudence, which helps explain why the Bank of the Philippine Islands, founded in 1851, is still a leader and is the second largest bank in the country.

Marie Josephine M. Ocampo, BPI

PHOTOS BY A.J.

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Who's driving your advertising?

By Roger Pe
Contributor

WHEN MOBILE ADVERTISING IN THE Philippines wasn't referred to as cell phone advertising yet, smoke and vans of carrying skinheads that inundate. Enthusiasts began of marketers were in the vehicles' back and side panels. Photos of products and brands reached innermost city alleys and far-flung towns.

As new printing technology arrived and photography with manifold are directors became the standard, things got better. There was much attention to the color separation process. Digital enhancements became common—the hues, either brightened for true-to-life results or embittered for stylish effects.

Latest proofs were scrutinized and with every output looking close to real, they elicited much crowd approval. Proof shots made pros drool and just by looking at them, they became even more inviting. Colas made you smile and cherry for more. Coincidences were born and re-borns because of their flawless skin tones...also, they looked younger and sexier.

Digital printing dawned on an outdoor advertising industry that grew by leaps and bounds, paving the way for advertising on moving vehicles.

> Digital printing paved way for advertising on moving vehicles

Wraparound-the-clock

Everyday, idiss, especially in metros where buses would stop, is a kaleidoscope of colors. Where only red (lit and white DM buses piled the metro before, it is now a palette of vibrant crimsons, yellows, purples, blues and greens of varying sizes brought to life largely because of one idea: The Wrap.

Obviously not a crap idea, Wraps (digitally printed designs on moving vehicles) are easy to master, all-weather resistant, cost-efficient and make moving vehicles attractive to many consumers. We wonder

OGILVY Manila's billboard for DHL "Giant Box."

they have caught forward-looking advertisers.

And why not?

On an ordinary day, tens of thousands of people are advertising messages on moving vehicles and are exposed to brands when, and where traditional advertising cannot. Multiplied by weeks or months, millions of captive viewers see them every year.

This doesn't include male hours when bumper-to-bumper traffic occurs along city streets and highways. People on these long queues not only are captive viewers but eventually become receptive. Simply put, advertisers don't run on empty...brand awareness or recall=sales.

Now you know why advertisers on MRT and LRT vehicles are the talk of town.

Get a spare sedan? Solid enough to put a creative thing on your RMW? Wraps are detachable, portable, and easily removable. They even protect your car from the elements. Want to make people's eyes roll? Want to make people's heads turn? Want to make a personal statement? Do the wrap.

On the road, in drive-thrus, public or private parking lots, vehicle advertising is a virtual non-stop selling machine. Unlike radio or TV sets which you can switch off, built-in vehicle ads you can throw away or canine advertising which you can click to the next website, it comes to us while we drive to work, go out-of-town or around the city, and travel through countryside north to south, east to west everyday.

C&S advertising attendee by lines or private is making the last lane all over the world.

GOINGS-ON

National coffee summit on

EXCELLERATION OF COFFEE MONTH THIS October, The Philippine Coffee Board Inc. (PCBI) will be holding a National Coffee Summit on Oct. 21 at the Allied Conference Center in Makati. This is the first time that a nationwide summit with barkad participants will come from all over the country to set address the lack in coffee production. Speakers will include Joel Lanuglasa, agribusiness head of Nestle, Nicholas Nash, cashier of the PNB Coffee Board, representatives from Liguo Coffee Board like Ed. Kelly Katigbak, The Caville Coffee Board represented by Dr. Andy Molina, and the Mindanao Coffee Board.

With one mission and vision which is to increase coffee production and achieve self-sufficiency in coffee, all coffee stakeholders are encouraged to join the summit.

Interested has to cover meals and materials will be charged. The coffee will be free of charge. Call 0920 9081 936, 7915 6502, 912 0609 or 09 05/0615886 or e-mail philcoffeeboard@gmail.com

Talk on anti-corruption set

A SYMPOSIUM ON THE "ANTI-CORRUPTION Convention on Anti-Corruption and Local Initiatives on Anti-Corruption" is slated at the IBP Auditorium, EDSA cor. Ortigas Ave., Quezon City, Dominique Cardeno for Information Technology Building, on Saturday Oct. 18, 1 p.m.

This symposium's guest speaker is Prof. Rosalie G. Llana from the Ateneo de Manila University, a consultant at the Office of the Ombudsman and the Philippine Human Rights Center.

Organized by the IBP Graduate School, in cooperation with the Master in Public Administration Program and its faculty members and students, the symposium program prompt includes registration of the participants; the invocation, to be delivered by Atty. Antonio Bautista; the singing of the Panambansang Awit and the IBP Hymn; IBPGS Dean John B. Bata's opening remarks; Prof. Raul S. Bunoy's presentation of the guest speaker; and an open forum after Professor Llana's talk.

Mall highlights 'one-stop shopping' in new campaign

MALLS ARE VIRTUALLY A "SECond home" for most Filipinos. A national survey revealed that around 60 percent of the population has made it a habit to visit a shopping center—going to the mall once or twice a month.

Malls are almost always crowded, especially during weekends as "one-stop shop" for fulfilling consumer needs. To buy food and other household essentials; meet with colleagues or friends; eat, or watch a movie, pay the bills, hear Mass, or even to just walk around and enjoy respite from the heat in this fully air-conditioned venues.

It is this aspect of providing the needs of its target market which has worked well for the success and efficiency of Ever Gotesco Malls, with more than 30 years' experience of running the "one-stop shop" concept. Even with the recent economic crisis, Ever Gotesco Malls has maintained its branches around Metro Manila.

Ever Gotesco Malls pioneered the concept of the "community mall" with locations in Ortigas, Daang Commonwealth Avenue, Quezon City, Intramuros/Caloocan, Iloilo, Bacolod.

This year, the company launches a new campaign in Ortigas and Commonwealth aimed at strengthening their brand identity, and inviting patronage to their stores with the tagline: "Mag Ever Ever."

"It is important for us to be the provider of family needs, so that when they need anything, they can just go to our mall which is located right within their neighborhood or community. They don't have to travel far and waste valuable time, money and effort," said Joel Go, president of Ever Gotesco Malls.

"We want the statement 'Mag Ever Ever' to be present in every home that surrounds our malls," said Chit S. Arao, corporate marketing manager of Ever Gotesco Malls. "Since we are practically part of their neighborhood, we want our clients residing within the 4-km radius of the mall to associate us with their essential needs such as groceries, play time, household needs, and even for various occasions such as birthdays, celebrations, and other situations that take place in every home. Ever Mall is design be there to provide their basic needs," Chit explained.

Go cited other advantages of Ever Gotesco Malls. "For instance, in Ortigas, which is a family community composed of advertising dwellers from Ortigas, Pasig, Cainta, and parts of Makati, we have more of family-friendly tenants like amusement centers, play areas, entertainment areas, a big Jollibee outlet, a medical clinic, and basic services like a barbershop on the ground floor, among others. We tailor-fit the list of tenants according to what our market needs and we can practically assign any shop there," he explained.

The Commonwealth branch, which is located right spreading middle-income communities in the areas of Commonwealth Avenue, Batasan, and Sauyan...offers those levels of the department store, the biggest supermarket and amusement center for families and grocery/mart employees residing in the area. It also has a big number of cell phone shops to cater to the young market and BPO workers, and a foreign or first market catering to the needs of the manner within the vicinity.

"Our customary should feel comfortable when they go to Ever, and treat it like a home away from home. There are no pretensions even in the way we dress up our stores," he added.

The recent economic crunch felt all over the world has also emerged as an advantage for Ever Gotesco Malls, Chit noted. "Everyone is trying all measures to save, so for us, it's an opportunity to strengthen our key points, which are affordability and convenience. You can get your basic needs from us, so you don't have to spend money on gas or transportation because we're just a walk away from your neighborhood."

As part of the "Mag Ever Ever" campaign, the Ortigas and Commonwealth branches will launch marketing efforts to reach their surrounding communities. The malls are expected to participate in the community events and reach out to their neighbors as a valuable member of society.

Ever Gotesco Malls was founded by Go Siong in the 1970s. It was Joes Go, a second-generation member of the Go family, who initiated the "one-stop shopping" building along the university belt at C.M. Recto Avenue. It housed the Gotesco Cinemas, Ever Department Store and Supermarket and various fashion and food outlets...the first establishment to keep it all in a one-stop shopping center style.

Making a 150-year-old bank more market oriented

From page B1

SVP for the personal banking division, says the bank is actually doing well despite the financial scenario.

"During the last three years, growth has been at double digits—loan growth is up 20 to 25 percent, funds growth is up 12 to 18 percent," she says.

She adds that despite a generally recessionary prevailing economy, there has been an uptick in SPI deposits since the past weeks.

Banking observers have noted that some Filipinos tend to transfer some of their deposits into SPI when there are jitters in the financial markets because of its image of stability, being the oldest bank in the country and one of the largest.

But SPI is trying to shed its image of a purely old bank run by traditional male bankers, at least in the consumer banking division which is led by a team dominated by women.

MA. Fraternit Sylvestong, SVP

Dizmpo, Go and other top female executives including Vashel Sylvestong, SVP and group head of the card banking group, recently met with a select group of media personalities to talk about the changes to SPI.

Dizmpo says, "While we do price-outshoot for having been a leader on banking innovation for a long time, we felt it best to be customer-focused rather than

TERESITA Tan

"inward looking." Hence, our investment strategy "We'll 'take five to the floor' reflects our broad ambition of bridging the beacon of financial confidence that Filipinos. It also reflects our broad transformation as we focus on putting our customers first. Our new campaign engages customers to be optimistic and/or positive about the future ... at the very least, to be actively involved in the process of emotionally improving their financial condition," she says.

Ocampo hastens to add that there are exceptions to the rule. It is just a coincidence that the group is dominated by women. But it is not a coincidence that the women are achievers. Ocampo, for instance, graduated magna cum laude from Ateneo de Manila University. Go is also a magna cum laude from UP.

But although stating that the Philippines, or at least Metro Manila is "business as usual," Dizmpo provides the following tips to readers, given the possibility of more challenging times ahead:

- Preserve your capital first.
- Get to know your bank manager for options on better planning investments.
- Review your needs.
- Focus on your investment objectives.

Asked if it is a good time to build a house, or buy a new car, the answers, "It really depends on what your real needs are. If you have money and the cash flow, go because the yields (on investments) are not really that attractive."

Ocampo adds, "But if you have major needs like education, you should defer the investments."

Meanwhile, SPI inaugurated last Sept. 16 a full-service bank in London, its first outside the Philippines.

Channel services SVP and group head Teresita S. Tan says London was chosen because of the language.

"We had to read about 500 pages of regulations," she says.

Tan says SPI could not contain a full service bank in the United States because of some regulatory issues which the bank is working on.

She says in London, the SPI branch has been gaining in the remittance market.

SPI also has many clients who are nurses and caregivers in Singapore married to British citizens. Many are concerned about remitting their money and getting the best possible yields.

She says SPI's Great Britain banking license allows the bank to access 12 European Union member countries and SPI is starting with Barcelona, Madrid, Milan and Rome.

PR CEO brings attention to forces reshaping world

LIKELYWASHING, EMPTY METRICS AND digital ethos of mixed—those were among the important concepts shared by Ogilvy Public Relations (PR) Worldwide president and CEO for Asia/Pacific Christopher Graves when he discussed three powerful forces rippling through Asia.

Hong Kong-based Graves delivered the keynote during the recent 15th National PR Congress sponsored by the Public Relations Society of the Philippines. The two-day congress was attended some 200 PR professionals and communications specialists.

Graves' presentation, entitled "Green, Grey, Web-wired and Tagged," corresponded to the congress theme "Waves, Shoals, Partnership."

"While the whole business world has been sensitized to the themes of climate change and the expected response of corporate responsibility, many companies are getting attached chiefs/chief officers to go green," Graves observed. Skeptical journalists and consumers, he explained, dismiss environmental posturing initiatives as token marketing ploys intended to "greenwash" the public.

Using biofuels as an example, Graves said: "Shifting toward biofuels looked very green last year until the prices of food sources soared, propelled by perceived demand for using these foods, such as corn for making fuel instead of food. To borrow from Sir Isaac Newton, every environmentally responsible action triggers an equal and opposite ethical reaction. Its new companies need to move from tactical do-good-er deeds to a comprehensive, strategic approach that starts from the inside, with their very own employees."

For companies to attain credibility in their social responsibility programs, Graves suggested that they "earn trust through quality certifications, email specific believable actions, align activities with the values of the brand and engage the stakeholders in relevant storytelling."

Speaking on the increasing number of aging Asians as yet another significant trend, Graves noted that China, Korea, Thailand are approaching the tipping point of becoming older nations.

"So birth rates plunge in most Asian countries, the youth segment—consisting of those below age 14—will shrink by 30-50 percent in the next 20 years. At the same time, a powerhouse of 'empty nesters' at peak earnings with no children to support are surging in numbers. Empty nesters come from the syndrome in which parents who may feel lonely when one or more of their children leave home. Some 1.96 members and customers are obsessed with youth and overlooking the greatest disposable income group of our lifetimes," Graves said.

On the power of digital media, Graves showed how the "so called Web 2.0—the Internet fueled by the user consuming via online networks and creating a whole new form of content—is creating totally self-aligning interest groups." These "tribes of mind, for sale, find each other through the creation of advocacy groups and new tools that facilitate micro conversations.

"Business leaders need to understand that this rise of 'social media' is altering the way consumers and stakeholders talk and relate to each other and to institutions. It's a new world of broadcast/branding, where in consumers are "tagging" companies and brands, thus creating brand impressions and reputations with no control from the companies themselves," Graves said.

As more companies leap into the digital world, Graves suggested a framework that involves fostering, encouraging and engaging a company's key stakeholders. Listening covers data-gathering and searching tools while encouraging entails influencer audit, conversation map, search visibility plan, empowerment strategy and multimedia visibility, among others. Engaging involves dealing with Web 2.0 and blog development and digital advocacy.

CHRISTOPHER Graves during the 15th National PR Congress

Laundry shop operation seminar

THE GOLDEN TREASURE SHELLS DEvelopment Program will conduct a two-day seminar on laundry shop operation on Oct. 20 and 26 from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. at the College of Social Work and Community Development on Magsaysay Avenue, corner Pianos Street, UP Diliman, Quezon City.

The seminar will focus on the basic types of services, the setup of laundry shops, purchase of equipment, workflows, prospecting activities, marketing strategies and staffing and organization.

Specific topics include dry-cleaning procedures, ironing, stain removing and unclogging. Bonus courses include making laundry-cleaning products, such as powder soap, liquid bleach and fabric softener.

For questions call 4367820, 9126031 or 4211377.

Easy way to earn tickets to Asian destinations

AS THE EXCITEMENT DRIVEN BY TRAvel continues to remain high on the wish list of the affluent, American Express Platinum Credit Card recently launched a program that richly rewards new card members who maximize the card's benefits within three months from acquisition.

The program that runs up to Nov. 17, 2008 only is aimed at travel enthusiasts and offers 20,250 American Express Membership Rewards (MR) Points (22,275 if which are awarded as bonus points) to new members who spend at least P150,000 within three months from card approval date. According to Jeanette Cagampan, senior manager, 20,250 Amex Membership Rewards points are equivalent to 15,000 air miles from one of Amex's frequent airline partners. The amount of miles can be traded in for round-trip tickets to any of these destinations under the airline's frequent flyer programs: Hongkong, Macau, Kaohsiung, Taipei.

"We have come up with a very easy way to get a ticket to any of these popular Asian destinations," says Cagampan. "It's our way of encouraging card members to explore the many benefits that come with the card."

Card members who spend less than P150,000 but more than P120,000 within three months of acquiring their cards are rewarded with a weekend stay at the Shangri-la Oriental Manila.

In addition to the easy way to earn air tickets and a weekend hotel stay, American Express Platinum Credit Card members have access to a round-the-clock concierge service and travel service within the Philippines and right key Asian-Pacific cities, financial flexibility as well as other perks. The concierge can do restaurant recommendations and bookings, hotel referrals and golf reservations within the Philippines—even gift delivery.

Amex members also have access while they are on the road to links to a travel counselor who can offer not only advice on routes and schedules but also charge air tickets against one's card.

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BUSINESS Friday

Branding boxes for bakers' use

THE INITIAL IDEA was to become a one-stop shop for home-based bakers.

By Chapulo Medina

AT 16, ROBERT Ong was already working. "I started to work for my father, then my brother, then for a friend," he says. Then he married Mary, and he decided to put up his own business.

"It was difficult during the first years," recalls Mary. The Ongs had bought a small warehouse, and with almost nothing left to operating capital, set up a print shop. When there were not enough jobs coming in, Robert would produce his own product line of printed products: flyers, stationery, cloth cards, and boxes.

Whatever he rolled off his presses, he published. "I now did 1,000 units of boxes," Robert says. "It took me almost three years to sell all." There were intimidating years for the young entrepreneur couple. It even came to a point when Robert wanted to sell the business.

Then one day, things seemed to fall into place. Robert had befriended Ryan at the Sylvia Sinyson Culinary School, and its proprietress Sylvia herself, enthusiastically picked them up and distributed in her baking class sessions. Inquiries started to trickle in for Robert's boxes, then orders started to pick up.

In the late '80s, when order monitoring was practically an unheard of concept, the Ongs guaranteed onsite the idea of being a one-stop shop for small bakers.

Many of Sylvia's culinary graduates were businessmen who just wanted to earn a little something from baking, and therefore could not afford to have their own boxes made. "Most printers wanted a minimum order of at least a thousand," Robert says. The Ongs were only too happy to sell retail.

"If someone came in with an order for 100 boxes, we were already ecstatic," Mary says.

It was time to put a business to their house. Taking the first letter of his and Mary's name, Robert coined their trade name, Rbee. Rbee was gaining recognition as a reliable brand and business partner of home-based bakeshops.

A critical step-up in the business occurred quite by chance. Robert had a paper supplier who offered him leftover custom stocks of uneven sizes but better quality. Seeing a golden opportunity, Robert started re-imaging Rbee boxes as a supplier of higher-end cakes and pastry boxes.

READ NEXT: B3.2

Euro RSCG Agatep bags Beer Na Beer

AD BUZZ

WITH A EMTRG AVERAGE HIGHER than big agencies in new business wins, Euro RSCG Agatep is a todash standing tall. The agency, affiliated with Euro RSCG, one of the world's most creative agency networks (2006 Global Agency Net work of the Year), just bagged Beer Na Beer's creative duties, apart from handling another beer-selling Asia Brewery brand, Kirin Energy Drink. The upbeat agency is set to officially announce two more major beverage brands from the same client.

Pueblo de Oro, a world-class golf course in Cagayan de Oro is another new business while the agency's PR team clinched a prestigious account—Spain's Tourism Board. With the win, the agency will be dealing with the Spanish government through its embassy in Makati and Spain Tourism Counsellor based in Singapore.

Cathay Pacific Airways, Canon Marketing Philippines and Healthcare Association of the Philippines (PHAP), Grayeon Shoes and Siam Cement Group are the agency's latest wins.

* * *

Ogilvy Manila is the lone Philippine finalist in the 2008 London International Advertising Awards released by the organizers this week. The agency's billboard entry "Iron Rod" for DFA Tanks headed to metal with its use of the box display of a giant bar suspended on a steel post. The entry credits Lizette Sampaco as ECD and writers, together with Andy Lizares, Mike Sinson as art director and Nathaniel Figueroa as print producer.

* * *

The Philippines' most technologically advanced post production house Optima and United formally opened an office in Vietnam last Oct. 2 with more than 100 guests attending from ad agencies, production houses, ad creatives and the Pinoy expat community.

Tony Gloria, founder and tireless driving force of Optima & United launched the event as "bridging Asia" which aims to connect the Philippines' best talents, artists and machines to one of Asia's most promising markets. Gloria cited their edge—world-class technology, highly efficient workflows and efficient management teams. Optima CEO Ben Jimenez and United partner, Investor director Jun Reyes each spoke about their dedication to excellence and respective company's strengths. Sales director Joshua Lizardo will manage Optima & United Vietnam.

* * *

In 1521, Wednesday and Friday nights are big and they look like rains Philippine Cardgame to advertising creative people's gig. Blame it on Creative Juice executive creative director Ikhie Hinkaka, one of Philippines' hottest and most awarded creative directors. 1321, Taubo's and Jun Jaucian' latest crawl drinker is located at 547 Shaw Boulevard, Mandaluyong City. Get your fill of German beers, Latin grooves, good old Filipino and festive dishes ... even the historical history.

* * *

Palanca winner Chris Montero, the first CD at Basic PDB and now a successful screenplay writer and film director, just won the Peace International Film Festival's Choice Award for his "2007" full-length movie. The Peace Film-

TOMMY Qua to open an office in Vietnam

(LOG) B3.3

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NOKIA

Globe Business

Vital values in the hypermart business

By Bonnie Tumoy
Contributor

THE HEADLINE TODAY ARE filled with corporate scandals and financial meltdowns. Values have gone out of style as profit becomes the overarching goal of many businesses. Some of you may be thinking that an article on values may not have much relevance in the world of business. However, as Shopwise, we believe with a great deal of conviction that the ultimate goal of enterprise, which is commercial gain, need not contradict our ultimate goal as human beings, which is doing what is right and making a positive difference within our sphere of influence. Success with a soul, for us, is the only sustainable success there is.

DONNIE Tumoy

There are many core values that have been of paramount importance in the success of Shopwise, and the emphasis given to each of these values varies according to the state of the business. However, there are four core values that are always relevant. For me, these are love, excellence, honor, and resilience.

Love

I really love what I do. In today's hyper-competitive world, no one can afford to be mediocre. There is a whole slew of highly intelligent, highly dedicated, and highly competent organizations out there. In order to succeed in your chosen field amid the speed and magnitude of changes happening in the world today, it is vital to love, and have a conviction and passion for what you do. Shopwise, you have to put your heart and your spirit into your work because the markets today are unforgiving and will not accept anything less than your masterpiece.

In order to find what you love, you need to be authentic. You cannot be true to yourself and find your own, and not unnecessarily others' or society's definition of success and winning. There are so many people we can learn from, such as our parents, peers and mentors, but at the end of the day we need to make our own choices. Some people call this discovering or implementing God's special plan for you. This can happen early or late in a person's life or career. When it finally does happen, the journey will be much more rewarding than finally reaching the destination.

Loving what you do goes hand in hand with loving those you work with, those you lead, or those who lead you.

I'd like to end this portion by borrowing a quote from one of the most revered individuals of the 20th century, Mother Teresa, who said: "We can do no great things; only small things with great love."

Excellence

I would like to begin this section by borrowing a quote from Steve Jobs who said, "Stay hungry. Stay foolish."

In our business, we define excellence as a continuing desire and hunger not to be the best but to out-learn itself, to offset inefficiency and quest against complacency in everything we do. The key is to have a reverence to people for pushing the envelope. One cannot do this when one is entrenched and drunk with success.

The entrepreneurial spirit dictates that people transcend yourself, exploit approach to allow for once a modicum of success is enjoyed within the organization. The company that learns risk averse and the "can do" attitude and yearning to constantly improve often disappears unexpectedly in the midst of excellence. Excellence is learned in a tradition of hardship, discomfort and challenge. The biggest enemy of excellence is complacency.

Honor

In the dog eat dog world of business, we will face all kinds of temptations to compromise our values. resist all this chaos, you need to hold on to and cherish a few core values. We need to maintain honor and not just guard our reputation. Reputation is what other people know about you. Honor is what you know about yourself. We all have the tendency to ignore our conscience in favor of rationalizing and justifying something wrong that we want to do. We may succumb to temptation every now and then, as much as possible we need to listen to our conscience. If it feels wrong, it is wrong. Be pragmatic, but whatever you do, cry to sleep at the end of each day knowing that you did your very best to be true to her when you wake up in the morning. No matter how scarred you become in the battle of business, you should always have a high character and integrity is gained by doing the right things, by delivering on your promises and commitments.

Resilience

As resilience is increasingly becoming a prerequisite in these difficult times, I will spend a little more time on this. We will to survive is imprinted in all of us. The quality of our lives is largely dictated by how we face adversity, temptation, and danger. Misfortune never descends on us without a reason. Misfortune is a blessing in disguise. Misfortune is learned in a tradition of hardship, discomfort and challenge. The biggest enemy of excellence is complacency.

Resilient people have a short bridge to reality. Very few people grasp the crucial issues that define their reality. Those that do are able to accept their circumstances immediately and find solutions to address it. Many people deny their reality because they are unable to face it. In doing so, they only postpone the inevitable or, worse, let events decide their fate for them.

Resilient people are flexible. They have the ability to adjust to their circumstances. They mould their very quickly from the recent past to the present. They have the ability to improvise and to make do when everything in their comfort zone has been taken away from them.

Finally, resilient people find meaning in the events that happen in their lives. They do not see themselves as victims. They believe that hardship is a natural course in life and there are important lessons to be learned from these hardships. They understand that, in fact, life does not get easier; it actually gets harder. The difference is one's ability to cope with difficult situations grows as one matures. On the other hand, less resilient people see themselves as victims, maskerading of such bad luck. They tend to blame everyone, except themselves. They try to cope by escaping reality through various addictions or simply sinking into bitterness.

As a final word, I'd like to leave you with this thought: All of us will want to make our own mark in this world. It is to be meaningful, we must leave a legacy that is fundamentally good and noble. Nice guys don't necessarily finish last, and based on what is happening in the world today, all serious good or bad will have their attendant consequences.

I have found that in my almost 20-year journey of working, what really matters is not so much where you are going, what you accomplish, or how much wealth you accumulate. What is of paramount importance is what you become in the course of your journey and how your experiences transform you and those around you for the better.

(The author is the President of Robinsons Supermarket Inc., owner of Shopwise. This is the ninth of a 10-part series on the Shopwise story.)

Euro RSCG ...

Turn to page BS-3

first in one of Asia's most important film festivals. Just like Melayaran says Fatimah Ahmad who bagged a $25,000 prize for her movie "Forget-Me-Not." Members were $25,000 each from Korean television station KBS. "100" stars Mylene Dizon as the concern-stricken woman who chronicles the 100 things she must do before she dies. Regine Domingo and former Miss Cosmo CE Tessie Tomas.

* * *

Ore Show, Cio, Cannes and Adfest haul here Joey Ong moves to Bates 141 from Ogilvy Activation as creative director. Ong was formerly with JWT and Interone Radio.

* * *

Tramfer up. Good things we're seen around. The "Bond Street" Electronic board on Jupiter Life Building. If you're coming from Pasco de Roxas and crossing Ayala, the view is awesome. The lighted sign spans majestically across the entire building and makes you feel good about its content.

McDonald's "Talking Mike," Beyond Wireless Localfest, Nestle "Raindrops" and Surf Studs" television commercials. While they're not exactly award-winning spots, there's a joy to watch and are decently produced.

Boost your business competence

PRIME COMMUNICATIONS announces the opening of Prime Academy, a technical learning center where the company can share its expertise in Internet Protocol (IP) to its select and valued customers.

Prime Communications core specialized and established Prime Academy to demonstrate the company's commitment to customer satisfaction. Through Prime Academy, Prime Communications not only delivers IP superior through the services it offers, but also through knowledge-sharing which is aimed at empowering clients and their growing businesses.

"Prime Academy was born out of our desire to continuously raise the bar in delivering customer delight. We placed a good amount of investment in this initiative to show our long-term commitment and the high value we place in our partnership with our customers," says John Yap, president of Prime Communications.

Prime Academy's faculty, composed of Cisco-certified engineers ranging from knowledge in fundamental levels, will arm clients with knowledge improvements in networking and IP communications. Subjects covered include Internet working fundamentals, constructing multi-site-based central networks and switched networks, and creating address spaces (WAN, NAT, and DHT).

For queries, e-mail primeacademy@primecorp.net.ph

A venture that is music to the ears

THE MUSIC BUSINESS HAS proven to be one of the most lucrative industries since the birth of the phonograph up to today's digital music download.

MyMusic.ph hopes to get a market share from this latest technological advancement in music recording. It is the only digital music store that is open to subscribers of both Smart and Globe land lines, Sun Cellular that allows one to download new music from the mobile phone.

Founded in late 2007 by a group of friends with experience in the entertainment and mobile value added services industries, the company owners realized they could take advantage of an already established business trend in the global music industry. "Both sellers and consumers are would excitedly rush to the neighborhood music store and spend on shopping money when traveling in the US or Japan to buy the latest vinyl LP of our favorite artists," said MyMusic.ph's managing director, John Alcuaz.

So with their love for music, they invested in securing content licenses from the record-ing companies and hired people who share their passion for music. They employed marketing professionals, content providers and IT consultants to make this dream a reality.

Very interesting is the name, "MyMusic", as his three children call him, a considerable with the new ways of work that Quentin, and lastly, second born Ronan, have brought in. Robert points to the networked personal computers and assorted printers found in the office, things he admits he may never learn to operate.

After an open heart surgery 10 years ago, Robert was confined himself to keeping track of the big picture. "My dad always had this vision of becoming a success in the manufacturing business," says Quentin. This is a vision that is still shared by the whole family.

Many who handles the financial side of the business, still bustles with energy and enthusiasm as she files in and out of her office. As a high school student, Quentin remembers putting in time to help out when not in school or studying. This is the same case with her other siblings.

With the holiday season coming, RM is ready to receive the expected annual rush of buyers. The new products line is already off the press and the last components of the marketing plan are being rushed into place.

New challenges

Even with all the talk of a global recession, there is still so much dynamism in the food industry that should negate any significant drop in sales, says Quentin.

With more responsibilities foisted on her when the graduated with a degree in Marketing from the Ateneo de Manila University, Quentin is looking forward to meeting the new challenges that the business faces.

A couple of years ago, most consumers never just consumed soda, the products that had been in stock during the past year would be considered that no item that sold well last year would not sell as much this year," says Quentin.

She is talking not just about new designs, but new products as well. Now, RM Home carries containers for pizza or nacho chips, noodles like yum and pancakes, purses, accessories such as printed baking cups and ribbons, even personalized packages.

RM Boxes has been transformed into a resource haven for anyone starting in the food business.

MYMUSIC.PH's Quentin Miranda and John Alcuaz

Branding boxes for bakers' use

Turn to page BS-3

This travel story implies users abandoned for the-on-the banks. Nellie does give way to simple but classy prices. He accomplished the brand by teaming up with a catchy slogan. You bake the cake, we make the box. Except that he now has not making boxes for cakes, but also for rolls, pastries, pies, cookies, muffins, even loaves.

THE VISION of the family is to be the preferred supplier of cake boxes.

Lingerie line goes into franchising

MINUS HUSBANDS AND WIFE TIAH Carlo and Kaye Garcia started the business four years ago, Hot Pink, a lingerie concept, has expanded in six stores.

"We have gone a long way," says Kaye. "The quantity we produce has gone up to four times our initial production."

The growth of the brand is also attributed to an aggressive marketing and public relations campaign that is also reinforced by the service rendered by the staff of the stores.

Sophisticated market

The merchandise ranges from sleepwear such as matching pajama bottoms and tank tops, baby doll nighties, chemise and robes to underwear like slips, brassieres and panties. These are made from imported fabrics like lace, suede, cotton spandex, rayon spandex and chiffon, but manufactured locally.

The prices range from P599 to P1,995.

Kaye also attributes Hot Pink's growth to a market whose tastes have become more sophisticated. She says, "Filipinas have become passionate about lingerie. They've learned that inner wear is just as important as the outerwear. So instead of buying appropriate bra-for-a-particular outfit," because of this, Kaye (who designs all the lingerie) and her staff are dedicated to delight their customers by producing new items every three months.

Something for every body

Kaye affirms, "We want to remove the impression that lingerie is only for the elite. In fact, you can wear sexy lingerie, whether you're a petite or plus size."

On the Hot Pink media raise are two special products. On full coverage bra for big-busted girls ("We have cups up to XXL," says Kaye), and the ultra-sexy bra, a stainless bra that enhances the bust of small-breasted women.

Hot business opportunity

Kaye is eager to bring Hot Pink to women all over the Philippines but most of their boutiques are located in Metro Manila. To help their expansion, she and her husband Carlo have opened their business in provincial branches in 2007. The first Hot Pink franchise outlet opened in SM Cebu early this year.

Kaye says, "Our franchisee in Cebu is so happy that he wants to open another store in Ayala Center Cebu as he can sustain the market in Cebu."

A franchise store in SM Davao is expected to open before the end of the year.

Kaye and Carlo prefer that their company grows at a more moderate pace, which is why they want their franchisees to have the same passion for the brand as they do. The couple conducts talks with franchise applicants to make sure that they are serious and committed. "Hot Pink is our baby. We can't just hand it to just anybody. We need to know that they'll take care of the business," Kaye reasons.

> Filipinas have learned that inner wear is just as important as outerwear

Modest investment

But when applicants do get the franchise, they are assured of support from the mother company. Kaye declares, "We have an open communication with them. We'll help them with getting a space, marketing, training the staff, and the design of the stores. We'll treat them as part of the family. We're happy if our franchisees are happy."

A Hot Pink franchise costs about P350,000. This includes the use of the name for five years (with option to renew), products and equipment but excludes the lease of the space and construction of the store. All in all, a franchisee would have to shell out around P1 million. "Our estimated time for ROI is 18 months. Hot Pink is a very lucrative business because we're the only big lingerie boutique," says Kaye.

Kaye and Hot Pink family are constantly thinking of ways to support e-commerce. Recently, they've expanded their product line to include skin products named Kiss (Sweet Pea scent) and Tease (Exotic Coconut scent). Under this category are lotion nails as body lotion, body scrub and body salt, body mist and body wash. After all, you'd want to have great-looking skin to go with the great-looking lingerie.

Kaye speaks in behalf of her husband Carlo when she says, "Hot Pink is our way of life. This is our son and only business. We love what we do and we're happy to share it with others."

Hot Pink has branches in Greenhills, Robinson's Place Ermita, Alabang Town Center and SM Cebu.

Asia's luxury infatuation under . . .

From page B3

economic crisis," she said.

Chadha, who is based in Hong Kong, said such behaviour is not unusual.

"There is a lot of spending which needs that feel-good factor," she said.

"When things are going really well, that is when a lot of people go and spend. People are not going to splurge on a bag if they have lost money during the day." Despite the negative signs, some top-end brands believe it is too early to tell if the global slowdown has stopped people buying.

"So far there has been no effect in regards to traffic or a decline in sales compared to last year," said a spokesman for jewellery brand Cartier.

"The effects of the economic slowdown on the luxury goods sector in Asia remains to be seen. Chairman still for a better indication to regards to whether the industry will be affected." Swiss luxury goods giant Richemont recently said the company enjoyed sales growth of 19 percent in the region during the five months to the end of August, although Japan swapped eight percent.

And the outlets, many long planned, keep coming.

The Emporio shopping centre in New Delhi was given the go-ahead two years ago and became one of the country's first dedicated luxury malls when it opened recently.

"Staff there were very positive," said Chadha, who has visited. Only around half of the glass were filled, Chadha added, although such a situation is not unusual for a new mall.

Whether the Emporio is bustling in six months could be a crucial test of whether the region will overcome the gloomy economy to remain a brand-selling powerhouse.

AFP

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BUSINESS Friday

'Won't customers abuse unconditional guarantee of service quality?'

Q: WE RUN SEVERAL 3-STAR hotels outside Metro Manila, three in Luzon, two in the Visayas and two in Mindanao. All hotels are located beside a shopping center where we encourage mini-department stores. Business has been good to very good in the '90s but competition seems to start in the last year of the 90's and intensified over the past six to seven years.

We were in (seven semi-) or (three years ago as one of the speakers in a marketing conference we attended. During the snack break, I approached you and asked you if you can give us a tip on how we can distinguish our hotels and survive from competition. You told us: should try giving unconditional guarantee of our hotel and department store service quality. You didn't have time to explain then and so we just went on as before.

Today, we're still asking the same question. We have not found a true differentiation. We have explored offering service guarantee in one or two aspects of our hotel and store service. But with just a limited guarantee, we've experienced a good number of customer abuse and outright cheating. In everyone asked and said: "What more with an unconditional guarantee offer? That should be a cinch."

Will you please tell us and explain to us your views? We'd especially appreciate your sharing your experience (good as well as bad) with what you call "unconditional guarantee of service quality?"

Understanding terms

A: It's always good to start with a clear understanding of our terms. So what's an unconditional guarantee of quality and customer satisfaction?

"That's simply a promise to your customers that if your service performance does not meet your promised standards, any dissatisfied customer will be entitled to some compensation. This compensation can take such form as a replacement, a refund, or a credit.

How does that unconditional guarantee actually look like? There are several published examples. Let's use one for each of your service businesses: for a hotel and for a store.

F1 Hotel in Denver is a 1- or 2-star hotel catering to two traveling segments. One is the businessmen who just want a clean and quiet hotel room for a few hours of rest. The other is truck drivers who sleep in their trucks at some resting points in their long travel. In this hotel chain, F1 succeeded in gaining 10 percent market share of Denver's 1- to 2-star hotel market. There's a share greater than the sum of the five next largest players in the category. The hotel claims its success is how it has never failed to live by its unconditional guarantee to customers: that:

"If a sleeping guest discovers that F1 does not have the lowest hotel rate for a 1-, 2-, or 3-person accommodation with a comparable level of comfort, within an 10 km geographical area, or if the guest noted a lack of cleanliness or hygiene in and outside his/her room, then the guest gets that night's stay free. No questions asked. We believe your interpretation."

In Singapore, the Robinson Group manages eight retail outlets under the brands of Robinsons, John Little, Marks & Spencer, Principles, Tissot, Coast, River Island, and the like. Robinsons operates under the mission of providing "a retail experience which exceeds our customers' expectations for customer service, product range, quality and value." In pursuit of this mission, it offers this unconditional guarantee:

"It is always our hope that you will be delighted with your purchase. If however, you find you are not completely satisfied with your selection, just bring it back with your receipt within seven days, and before you have used it. We will make a change or give you a complete refund. At once. And with a smile."

So that's the distinctive character of unconditional guarantee. 100 percent return or money back to 100 percent claiming customers. So you mentioned, it is this character that people inside your organization are skeptical about in terms of your actual experience with "customer abuse and outright cheating." Actually, that customers would take advantage of your guarantee and go in the mission of "ripping" a service failure on the part of your hotel or store is just one of the three key issues about unconditional service guarantee. This is the trade customer issue.

Two issues

The two other issues are:

1) How effective will the service guarantee be in communicating your service excellence to current as well as potential customers? That's the brand equity issue.

2) How successful will the service guarantee be in creating a culture for service excellence within your organization? That's the internal marketing and TQM (Total Quality Management) issue.

There's a fairly recent research (in 2004) that 2 professors at the National University of Singapore conducted on service guarantees which sheds light on all 3 issues. This is the study of Jochen Wirtz and Doreen Kum on "Consumer Cheating on Service Guarantees."

He highlight two major findings of this study. The first is about the trade customer issue and, more than the size of the guaranteed payout, for example, 10 percent money back or 100 percent money back, has no effect whatsoever on the amount of customer cheating. The implies that you can better off the longer-lasting benefits of a 100 percent money-back guarantee and you can do so without at all worrying that your large payouts will lead to an increase in customer abuse or cheating.

Of course, we heard you say that "wish just a limited guarantee, lyon't risk other abuses." Actually, the study found that a good number of customer abuse and outright cheating." But there was no number in this observation of yours. What's the magnitude of this customer abuse and outright cheating?

Some many percent of your honest buyers or non-shoppers were shoppers were guilty? Remember what Tom Peters said: "What is not measured well cannot be managed well."

Here's the second major finding. The research found that customers grow more and more reluctant to cheat as the service given more and more exemplars of their just satisfactory. That means that as you stretch higher and higher level of service excellence and so you get more and more beyond customer satisfaction and into customer delighting, you have less and less to worry about quality customers versus the average customers in each of your service categories. The brand equity issue and the internal marketing/TQM issue are encompassed by this research finding and implication.

So there you are, the three issues in your question. You can take to (nothing the three on) to issues about getting the cost of offering unconditional guarantees of service quality and customer satisfaction. There are your "good as well as bad" sides of service guarantee. As you say, the "bad" outside is not that large. Most people's preoccupation was largely a set of imaginary hostilities. And as you also learned, you can overcome the unnecessary fear by observing Tom Peter's call for motivating as well as by validating with your store customers or employees the "Wins and Sins's research insights.

Send questions to Marketing Rx@philstar.com and Editor

LUXURY goods advertising is seen on the side of a tram in the Central district in Hong Kong

Asia's luxury infatuation under pressure during economic woes

HONG KONG—DORING a recent trip to her expensive Hong Kong hairdresser, luxury brand consultant Radha Chadha asked her stylist if current turmoil in the world's stock markets had affected business.

"I am now offering people shorter haircuts. It's so they will last longer," the stylist told Chadha, author of "The Cult of the Luxury Brand: Inside Asia's Love Affair with Luxury." The question of whether the Asian market for branded handbags, watches, jewellery and fashion will be tapped or scalped by the likely global economic slowdown is dominating investors' minds.

Over the past five years, Asia has provided extremely strong profits growth for luxury names such as Louis Vuitton, Gucci and Rolex, Chadha said.

"Asia has been very helpful in keeping the luxury industry booming a decent rate of growth," she told AFP.

High streets are packed with the heavily designed "brand experience" stores, even in second and third tier Chinese cities, highlighting the crucial role the country plays in luxury companies' growth strategy.

Glossy magazines heave under the weight of high-end adverts, with a recent 808-page edition of Hong Kong based lifestyle monthly "Prestige" tipping the scales as a heading swapping three kilograms (6.6 pounds).

But there are creeping signs that the region's tantalising stock markets could strike the previously insatiable appetite for the once-found name.

Japan's retail sector has been in the doldrums for a while. Sales at department stores dropped 3.1 percent in August from the same month a year earlier, the sixth consecutive monthly decline, the Japan Department Stores Association said.

Half as one of Singapore's prime shopping districts, retail sales of luxury goods had slipped in recent days because of fewer tourists. Customers are buying less and some just browse, they said.

The number of visitors to the city state fell 7.7 percent in August compared to a year earlier.

"We are located in a tourist area and there are fewer tourists now," said one salesperson in a store selling Prada handbags.

A Japanese tourist earning top of a nearby Gucci store said she had planned to spend 3,000 Singapore dollars (2,000 US) during her trip on branded goods, but recent events had cut her budget.

"It makes me feel guilty to spend more because of the

more B3

BUSINESS Friday

Jeweler with golden touch makes waves

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

WHEN IT COMES TO fashioning masterpieces out of fine gold, few can compete with veteran jeweler Antonio Arienza Jr.

A product of Meycauayan, Bulacan—the jewelry capital of the Philippines—Arienza, 48, owns a 50-man jewelry group that operates the award-winning Golden-hills Jewelry chain with six branches in leading malls; and Goldenza Jewelry, which executes designs that are sold in other jewelry shops here and abroad.

ANTONIO Arienza Jr. at work

In fourth year he initially resisted having to work in his father's gemology at 14 years old because while his classmates were having fun on weekends, he was busy helping his father run the shop.

But he realizes now that his early work experience contributed a lot to his considerable accomplishments as he learned early on to be an expert at detecting real gems and to appreciate the beauty and value of fine jewelry.

At first, the second of eight children was employed by his father, Antonio Sr., to follow in his footsteps and take over the gemology business.

But plans went awry when his father was curtailed in 1979 and the family had to sell everything they owned to scrape enough capital to get him started from scratch.

Arienza does Bulacan proud with his designs

Arienza, then studying at the University of Sto. Tomas.

While with his relatives, he learned other parts of the business, such as how artisans work with gold and silver as well as precious stones to bring life to intricate designs, and the risks involved in running a capital-intensive jewelry shop.

PEARL pendant (above) (Executive Jade)

JEWELRY, B2-3

DOT wants to harvest 'gold mine' in incentive travel

THE DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM (DOT) is urging the industry to pony up and take a piece of the action of the huge incentive travel market.

"With a multitude of the world's companies, big and small, using travel as incentives or rewards for their employees and marketing come-ons for their customers, the size of this niche but enormous market is simply hard to estimate since it can go beyond expectations and imaginations, especially with global corporate movements getting to be quite fluid," said Tourism Secretary Joseph Ace Durano.

"And with the world's globalizing businesses, fast-increasing urban populations and expanding consumer markets, incentive travel is simply the way to go, and we are out to lead our tourism industry to this gold mine," Durano said as he announced the staging of the 7th Philippine Incentive Mall Incentive Marketing Conference at the Crimson Woods Taguaytay and Canyon Cove Hamegbo, Hamegbo, on Nov. 27-30.

And as the dash is on for sites in the Phil-Incentive 2008, where we expect over 300 delegates to participate, especially industry leaders, travel and incubus professionals, business executives, and marketing practitioners, among others," said Tourism Undersecretary for planning and promotions and conference chair Edu Jimeno.

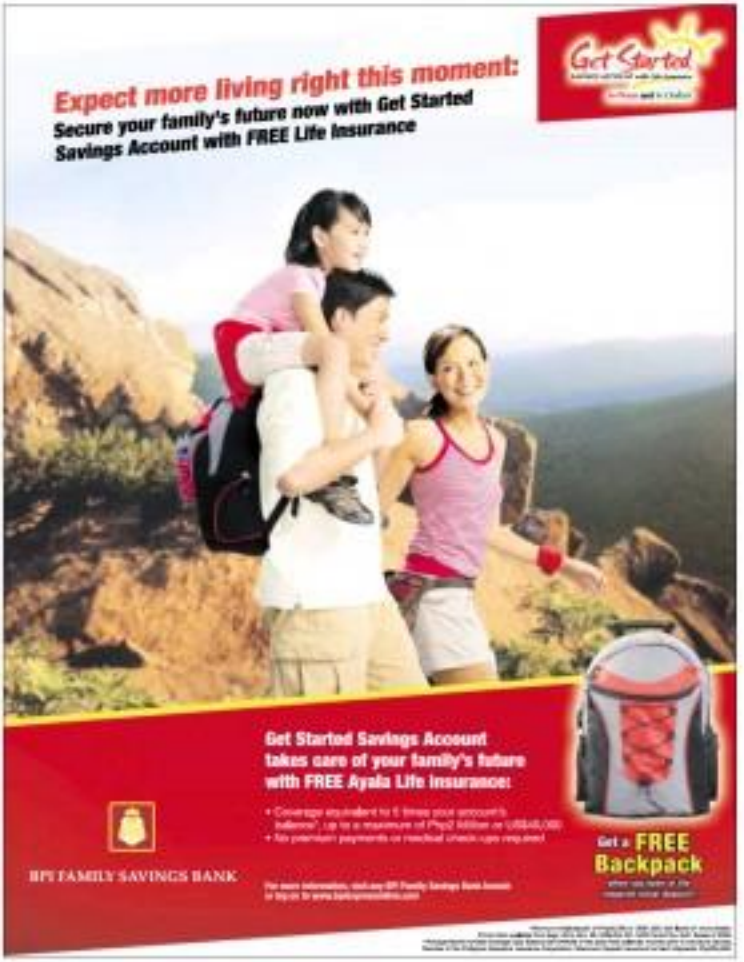
"At least 24 local and foreign experts on subsidized to speak during the event's three intensive 'Three Talks' days, each offering a great business networking opportunity," Jimeno added.

The launching of Phil-Incentive 2008 is a wake-up call to the Philippine tourism industry to raise and increase their levels of creativity and innovation in order to get the Philippines one step ahead of its competitors in the region. Further, the conference is designed to professionalize the local incentive travel industry.

At the same time, Phil-Incentive will help streamline the educational, developmental and networking goal of the Movement of Incentive Travel Executives (MITE) and the Philippine Convention and Visitors Corporation (PCVC), the marketing arm of the DOT.

The event, according to conference convener Rene Garcia, will ensure public awareness on the value of incentive travel, especially among corporate end-users and beneficiaries.

Call 832-5054/36, 524-6001, 524-0318 loc 27 for inquiries.



People, Events & Products

E-mail: pr_page@inquirer.com.ph
Editor Arlene Rupinera

Boost business by outsourcing your data center

DATA CENTERS HAVE BECOME AN INTEGral part of an organization's makeup. Because companies manage enormous amounts of data, their survival is becoming more and more dependent on their data centers. This physical facility acts as a centralized environment where organizations can manage the servers, where the data is stored, as well as the networks and other computer equipment that facilitate access to information.

Operating a data center, however, can be a daunting task, what with all the important elements that need to be managed and secured. Looking after the proper maintenance of servers, ensuring connectivity and uptime, introducing new services or technologies, and worrying about the physical security of equipment are valid concerns that organizations have in having their own data center. It can also be a costly proposition, in terms of money, time and human resources. Because of these factors, many organizations have recognized the benefits of outsourcing their data center operations.

The financial impact of data center outsourcing is one of the many reasons why organizations choose this option for their data center needs. Operating an in-house data center requires a huge investment. The cost of equipment, maintenance and data space be its physical facility should be a precision-controlled, air-conditioned environment; there must be a round-the-clock back-up system; fire support, alarm systems and access controls must also be employed. All these systems are expected to incur significant electric consumption. With outsourcing, after the initial investments of buying servers for the data, companies can entrust the management of their equipment to their data center service provider and thus would not have to worry about the day to day management issues.

Keeping connected to networks can also incur huge expenses. Data centers usually employ fiber optic connections that ensure that an organization's business-critical applications are always accessible, thus providing clients with increased connectivity and greater network redundancy without the exorbitant costs. Data center service providers also provide for bandwidth scalability so that the high-speed lines do not bog down even in peak loading hours.

Carrier-neutrality is an important benefit of data center outsourcing. Organizations can choose their own carriers or can seamlessly transfer to a different carrier if they need to. They can also be assured that their data center provider employs up-to-date security measures to protect important data from damaging attacks.

Outsourcing data center operations also offers advantages in terms of technical support. It means that organizations need not deploy human resources to manage their equipment as the service provider already employs a team of experienced technical support personnel who can be dedicated to their account. Through the implementation of stringent Service Level Agreements (SLA), clients can expect a guaranteed level of service for their needs. Concerns about getting enough manpower or session will be eliminated since outsourcing data center operations means that the company's needs are focused on, ensuring continuous support.

Outsourcing data center operations makes sound business sense, and by carefully choosing the service provider clients can enjoy all its benefits. One company that has made its name as a leading outsourced IT service provider is ePLDT, which owns and operates three Data Centers, the first purposely-built Class 'A' Internet Data Center (IDC) in the country.

ePLDT's Vitro Data Center sits on top a robust carrier neutral telecommunication infrastructure that provides redundant and high capacity connectivity around the globe. Designed to meet the requirements of organizations for mid-to-mid IT infrastructure solutions, this world-class IDC building is designed to be secure, and available with a total 24x7 professional support from certified information technology teams.

Vitro's highly scalable facility is supported by its fault-tolerant environment and skilled workforce. Its advanced telecommunications infrastructure provides multiple options for organizations' bandwidth requirements. Its carrier-neutrality also makes it possible to reach diverse audiences with services delivered in the fastest way possible, and provides industry leading Service Level Agreements (SLA) which covers both exclusive and non-exclusivity.

Vitro Data Center is also the first Internet data center in the country to be certified for the ISO 27001:2005 Quality Management System standard. It is also certified for the ISO 27001:2005 Information Security Management System standard. Vitro is accredited by the Philippine Export Zone Authority.

With real 24x7 operations, and expertise in data center services, Vitro lets clients relax and focus on their core competencies while enjoying all the benefits of outsourcing their data center operations.

For more information on Vitro Data Center, call 867-8000 or visit www.eplDT.com.

SMART, SANTAY BATA 163 FOR CHILDREN'S WELFARE

Leading wireless services provider Smart Communications Inc. (Smart) and Santay Bata 163, a child welfare group with 21 years of experience, recently formalized its Smart-Santay Bata 163 Customized Site, powered by Infotracer. The Smart-Santay Bata 163 Site allows concerned citizens to report child abuse-related information confidentially without a true choice on their Smart or Talk 'N Text cellphones. To send information, subscribers only have to key in SBS163

ETON PROPERTIES, SM HYPERMARKET INK DEAL

Eton Properties Philippines Inc. recently signed a deal with SM Hypermarket Inc. for the development of a commercial center it is developing in Bacoor and one complex dubbed Eton Centris in Quezon City. The SM Hypermarket will be located in Centris Station, the main shopping area of the 11-hectare Eton Centris project in Quezon City. Located at the corners of Edsa and Quezon Avenue. For more details, call 840-3000 or visit www.eton.com.ph. Shown are, (from left) Michael Tan, Anita Brawner Dee CCO, Roland Raras, SM Hypermarket CHP; Herbert Sy, SM Hypermarket president; Harry C. Sio, Eton vice-chairman and CEO; Cosmin Tan Jr. Eton chairman; Rodolfo Ignacio, Eton president and COO.

MFITI scholars graduate Oct. 22

THE 23RD BATCH OF SCHOLARS OF MFI Technological Institute (MFITI), formerly Meralco Foundation Institute, will graduate during the 22nd Commencement Exercises to be held Oct. 22 at the Bistro Igcasabelen in Quezon City.

The commencement exercises will be preceded by a solemn Baccalaureate Mass at exactly 12 noon.

Composed of 150 students, the graduates successfully completed the three-year requirements for technical courses (electrical, electronics, instrumentation, tool and die) and the two-year requirements for information technology (IT).

Other graduates of Toshiba Information Equipment Philippines Inc, Yoshiyuki Yano, will be the guest of honor and keynote speaker.

This year's graduation theme will dwell on "MFI Technological Institute going beyond borders."

On hand to welcome the guests are MFITI board of trustees to be led by MFI president Col. Alex T. Navarro, plus the department heads of the school.

A pledge of loyalty to the alma mater will be recited by the graduating students to be followed by the distribution of certificates.

Honor graduates will be awarded medals of academic excellence. Participating companies who sponsored scholars and those admitted shows as OJT [on-the-job training] will be awarded plaques of appreciation.

MFI scholars, among the ranks of quality manpower, were caught with electric trolley equipment that installs and maintains the telecommunications with various formation necessary for effective performance and productivity.

Statistics show that 98 percent of MFI graduates are employed even before they graduate.

2ND MARPE HEALTH EXPO HELD AT SM MEGAMALL

Director Socorro Jumamoy I. Dotollo of the Philippine Institute of Traditional and Alternative Health Care (Pitahc) was the special guest during the ribbon cutting and opening ceremonies of the 2nd Marpe Health Expo at SM Megamall – 3M Atrium, Mandaluyong City. The expo, which is organized by the Chamber of Herbal Industries of the Philippines Inc (Chai), is the members' way of thanking the public for continued patronage of its natural, herbal and organic products through discounts and prizes. Shown cutting the ribbon are (from row, from left) Chai president Dr. Rodney B. Villanueva, Dispirtse nurse and Chai Marpe committee member Alvin Bernard; Sambong Lola, Virgin Coconut Oil, Ampalaya Lola, Malunggay Lola, Oral and Jeanette M. Perdigon. At the back are Mike Tumulak, Spa Essentials, Mona Lisa T. Bishop of the Ile and Tattoos and other Chai committee members and exhibitors.

Probing link between bras, breast cancer

HEALTH CARE, A BI-MONTHLY magazine for health-conscious consumers, covering both traditional and emerging medicine, tackles the growing concern on breast cancer in its September-October issue. One of the most persistent rumors in the one that says breast cancer is caused by wearing bras. But is that really just a rumor? Health Care magazine presents both sides of the debate on breast cancer and breast cancer.

Health Care is published by Medicard Publications, a medical publications company that is also the publisher of the Philippine Pharmaceutical Directory (PPD), which is the drug reference of choice by most Filipino medical doctors and PPD's Nursing Drug Guide, the only drug guide designed for Filipino nursing students and professionals.

New San Jose Builders opens Victoria Station 2

NEW SAN JOSE BUILDERS INC. ONE OF THE PREMIER REALTY DEVELopers in the Philippines is proud to announce the opening of the second building of the Victoria Station, Victoria Station 1 is slated to be delivered on December 2008. The Victoria Station 2 boasts of the following features and amenities: contemporary architectural design, accessibility, prime retail living, 25-storey condominium with penthouse units, 1,360 residential units, commercial and office spaces, coffee shop, gym and spa and ample parking spaces. One can avail of a 42 square meter, 2 bedroom unit for a very affordable price. The typical 2-bedroom unit is specially designed for urban living. Dwellers can choose from typical and customized units designed specifically for convenience and relaxation. With New San Jose Builders Inc you are assured of a great value, real investment.

Best IT Practices

THE CENTER FOR GLOBAL BEST PRACTICES IS HOLDING A TWO-DAY pioneering seminar entitled, "Best IT Practices in Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery Planning, scheduled on Thursday and Friday, Nov. 13 and 14 at the Asia Brunei Ln, Mandaluyong City. The program will teach attendees best practices to ensure their IT operations are protected from any disaster that may occur, whether it be natural disasters ranging from typhoons and earthquakes to cyber attacks. Participants will learn how to create compact and threat analyses, and develop solutions to those threats. Discussions will include global standards in testing, implementing and maintaining business continuity and disaster recovery plans, and providing checklists and other documentations to get one's company started. There will also be workshops that simulate disaster situations. The unique program will feature Patrick Dales, GITA, CISSP, ISCE, founder and managing director of Digi Threat Solutions. Dales has over 20 years of experience in the military, including a wide range of expertise in the field of IT and security, with over 15 years of experience as a security consultant in the Asia-Pacific region and the Americas. He has handled numerous multi-cultural teams, trainings, programs and projects with US government agencies, as well as across several industries such as telecommunications, banking, finance, and business process outsourcing (BPO). He holds several IT Security certifications and accreditations from prestigious international institutions such as being accredited lead examiner certified lead auditor, certified information security professional, and ISO case certified examiner. Interested participants may call 842-7448 and 914-e-mail pascal@cgbp.org, for the complete details, registration, and list of the upcoming seminars, visit the website www.cgbp.org.

Hospitality Management course at NEC

NEW ENGLAND COLLEGE OF BUSINESS AND SCIENCE (NECBS) OFFERS BS in Hospitality Management in cooperation with the American hotel and lodging association (Educational Institute (AH&LA-EI), and a bilateral partnership under Swiss's National Certification (Program. Students who complete the program will receive from AH&LA-EI an 8-course certificate in Hospitality Operations, and a 5-course certificate in each of the following areas: Rooms Division Management, and Accounting and Financial Management. Apart from these, they will also earn International Certificate II from Swiss in each of the following skills: Commercial Cooking, Bartending, Baking, Housekeeping, and Front Desk Services. Enrollment is ongoing for the second semester which opens on Nov. 3. For more information, visit the campus at 40 Gonzaga Avenue (between Bonpas and Cordillera), or call 711-5488, 742-8302, 711-0852 or 711-4378. Visit the website at www.nec.edu.ph.

Super Bowl's afternoon merienda buffet extended

CHINESE FOOD LOVERS WILL DEFINITELY TOUCHDOWN AT SUPER BOWL OF CHInese Food's delicious buffet specials in "Super Delicious Afternoon Merienda" at its Tomas Mapa Branch in Sampaloc, Manila and Festival Mall Alabang branches until Nov. 30. The all-you-can-eat buffet for only P145 per person (inclusive of all charges) features a noodle dish of the day, soup of the day, assorted dimsum items, congee of the day, and dessert with a single serving of iced tea or lemonade from 3 to 5 p.m., Mondays to Fridays. Other Super Bowl of Chinese favorites are located at Glorietta 4 Ayala Center, Makati City; SM City Rosario Drive, Barrio Dila; SM Megamall Megatrio in Mandaluyong City; San Pedro in Gladstone City; Gateway Mall, Araneta Center Cubao, Quezon City; SM Mall of Asia, Pasay City. Also visit the affiliated Big Bamboo Restaurant located at the 2nd level of Greenhill 3 Ayala Center, Makati City. For Super Delivery, just dial 721-8888. Super Bowl delivers dishes hot and freshly prepared or mechanically sealed and hygienic microwaveable containers.

SMPFCC supports Pink Kitchen

SAN MIGUEL PURE FOODS CULINARY CENTER JOINS ETHNOS DELIcious entities and food companies in supporting Pink Kitchen, a culinary gathering for a cause, in cooperation with Kanlaon Foundation and ABS-CBN Publishing Inc. to be held on Oct. 18 (10 from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. at the Rockwell Tent in Makati City. A world of flavors awaits attendees as visitors of Asian, Mediterranean, fusion and other cuisines are featured. Proceeds of the event will go to the Kat Sevino foundation, an advocacy group for breast cancer awareness. Visit the SMPFCC booth at 25 your entrance, right side) on the following dates: Oct. 18 lunch, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. and Oct. 18, dinner, 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. For ticket inquiries, call 687-3645. Everyone has a lot of P200 – adults and P100 – children (below 12 years old). Good for a day only.

Best brands, great value at The Off-Price Store

DISCOVER THE OFF-PRICE STORE, A FASHION HAVEN OF BRANDED goods for less. Find chic outfits in fashionsensational fashion, in bags and accessories. The Off-Price Store houses the world's favorite international brands. Aside from the branded merchandises, you will also enjoy the one-of-a-kind personalized service of the The Off-Price Store clerks. Be it sizes, color schemes, those rare items you've always wished for, and price cuts, they are there to make your shopping experience topnotch. The Off-Price Store has branches in J.M. Basicos Drive, Bonifacio Center, Jupiter Street, Makati; Alabang Town Center, Paseo Mall, Cebu City and Baguio, Session City. For inquiries call 894-8617/7575, e-mail offpricestore@gmail.com or visit their Facebook page.

PINOY ASIAN SUDOKU CHAMP AWARDED

Tyna Chay Cruz, the exclusive distributor of the world-famous food supplement brand Nu Skin, was recently feted by Nu Skin at Cucina Ma a special lunch at the Elar Place Valencia Baguio City. Pangalawang sinungaling recently concluded Brand's Sudoku Challenge 2008 dala Pacific Rim to Singapore's Wu Lily. The 14-year-old math wizard, a sophomore student of San Pangasinan Universal Institute, trained 150 students and young professionals in Baguio City prior to his Orlino, Iloilo, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Thailand and Singapore and was proclaimed the first Asia Pacific Open Champion. Shown is Sara Jane Ibanez her mother receiving a special commemorative plaque from Tyna Drug Corp sales manager Rodante Tuvay.

FEATURES IN BRIEF

PR seminar set

THE PUBLIC RELATIONS SOCIETY OF THE PHILIPPINES (PRSP) is when prior to its brand-new professional development seminar entitled "Branding the Philippines: Ano po ba ang ibebenta natin?" The seminar aims to orient PR practitioners on how best to brand the Philippines and create quality image to position the country. The seminar will be held on Oct. 24, 2008 (Friday) at South Road A & B, 2/F, Ayala Tower One, Ayala Avenue, Makati City. Speakers are noted government leaders who spearheaded promotional measures for the Philippines and local government units as well as private sector leaders who are leading the drive to make the country and their companies famous. Among the confirmed speakers are Tourism Secretary Ace Durano on "Philippines as a destination"; former Bulacan Gov. Josie dela Cruz on "Using PR in creating local flavors to build a better brand," Ayala Corp.'s Melody de Leon on "Hello Philippines and Hello World: Reinventing Philippines for tomorrow," and Jamie Bautista on "Branding the Philippines." Other invited speakers are Tourism Secretary Ace Durano on "Philippines as a Tourism Destination" and Carmilyn Cruz (Drop Whatever) on "Using PR in creating local flavors to build a better brand."

Call PRSP at 6308091 0 or 6380012 for details.

YMMA nominations accepted

NOW ON ITS 47TH YEAR, MAKATI'S LAKO FIELD IS RE-ONE (www.makatiffi.net), organizer of the Young Market Makers Awards, is accepting nominations until Oct. 31, 2008 for achievers 35 years and below.

YMMA is not unlucky aimed at providing inspiration by recognizing excellent young Filipino marketers and entrepreneurs. Mirrored to honor achievements that encourage and inspire young people to be innovative entrepreneurs and outstanding brand builders. These individuals have proven they can make things happen by formulating and implementing responsive and creative marketing strategies that change the way business is conducted in their fields," said Diego Dacanay Jr., president and CEO of Makatiffi and Fieldex Inc.

"The inspiration Philippine society with the brilliance of its youth. Nominate your best candidates to the 47th YMMA," said Dacanay. He also added that individuals, groups or companies can nominate candidates who are either marketing achievers or owners/part owners of an enterprise. They can also be involved in various industries such as event's marketing, brand management, advocacy marketing, sales management and more. "They just have to fill out an application form to online (www.youngmarketmakers.com) and submit the requirements needed.

The YMMA is an advocacy project of Makatiffi and Fieldex Inc. and officially endorsed by the Philippine Franchise Association (PFA), the Philippine Retailers Association (PRA) with Marketers as Platinum Sponsor. Will Trends as the official research partner and Microdata as official AV partner.

For questions, call 41 22834 or text 09 05 49 14886.

Buy a gift, help a young graduate

THE YOUNG scholars of Pantao, Jr. in Sari

FESTIVAL OF THE LOCAL GIFT from this holiday why not opt for a different kind of present? One that fills tummies and helps young women scholars graduate.

Starting this month, the Pantao School, an NGO-managed technical-vocational school that educates the poor and homeless women training, is organizing a food sale that will offer Chicken over goodies baked by its own students. The gift items are very affordable: 3 pieces of the inside for chicken strips, seafood and mains cookies cost only P120 per piece while a package of half-dozen-sized, rich cheese-filled brownies are priced at only P150.

Anne Marie Jacinto, school directress, says that the school is grateful to have had private individuals and corporate donations, like GLAD, supporting them. "Their support it a boost for the school since they provide us without the quality products we need which greatly influence and enhance the culinary skills training of our students," she says.

As one of the event's major sponsors, GLAD, through Glenn International Phils. Inc. has been providing the school with all the baking materials for the food sale as GLAD Cindy's Bake, GLAD Cling Wrap as well as GLAD Aluminum Foil, GLAD Garbage Bags and GLAD Zipper Bags, all of which are used in the school's baking and cooking classes.

"We at Pantao are very fortunate to have them, and we are truly grateful for their help," says Jacinto.

The food sale is part of the school's effort to raise funds for its undergraduate degree for serving students—many of whom live in far-flung areas like Antipolo, Fairview, Cainta, Taytay and Bulacan—and thus require quite a sum for transportation and food allowance as they report for on-the-job trainings in Makati, Manila and other areas.

Currently, the student population of Pantao (located along Pantao Street in San Juan) is at 160 students per year. Majority of its young women scholars rely on funds donated by private individuals and companies. Many of the students are also hard-pressed to raise tuition fees since their family, and are thus running hard to be able to consolidate into the workforce of permanency and free-doing establishments. The sad reality, however, is that a majority of them do not even have the money to eat three square meals a day.

But for majority of its students, there's still room for hope. Pantao, after all, has a 100-percent track record of all its students eventually becoming employed in prestigious hotels and restaurants in metropolitan after graduation. Aside from teaching them job skills and good work ethics, the school also offers spiritual formation through the Pantao of the Open Door. Pantao School is a project of the Foundation for Professional Training Inc.

For inquiries, call 7270301 or 02.

Helping make every Filipino an entrepreneur

TIME AND AGAIN, FILIPINOS have proven to be among the most enterprising persons in the world. From micro-entrepreneurs to the big tomatoes, they have excelled because of their passion for their chosen business. This is evident in the 9th-18th regional cluster stories on Filipino SMEs who have succeeded with their innovative products and services.

This world-class creativity and entrepreneurship takes center stage again in the 7th Filipinopreneurs awards night from Oct. 14 to 19 at the SM Megamall Megatrade Hall.

With the theme "Career-grace for Global Competitiveness: Nalong Negosyanong Global Pinoy," the event gathers small and medium enterprises (SMEs) engaged in franchising, dealership, direct selling, transportation, logistics, food and beverage, health and beauty, technology, service business, and trading, among others.

Profitable businesses such as personal care, bed-and-breakfast, wine refilling, liquid dish washing and fabric softener making, home-based meat processing and emerging micro-enterprises are also being tackled.

"Sa Negosyo Ilaya naan here out of the belief that entrepreneurship is indeed necessary in development. This from the Department of Trade and Industry indicates that majority of the SMEs need all sorts of support to further boost their growth," says Beth Garbo, exhibit manager of the SM Megamall Hall which is organizing the event.

She said that the environment says, the only one of its kind in the country, offers free seminars from the most sought after business executives to help rekindle the entrepreneurial spirit in every ordinary Filipino.

This effort, Garbo added, will create employment and livelihood opportunities and help combat poverty.

Moreover, there will also be the Business Capital Management and Financing Series featuring talks from the Philippine Center for Entrepreneurship, Venture, Finances, the Technology Resource Center (TRC) and the Center for Bop Music Philippines on Oct. 18. This series will teach participants how to nurture and make a sure business grow.

A regular feature is the Asian-se Negocio Academic Series by Universal Motor Corp., dealer of Nissan vehicles, which focuses on the Sarmiento management business on Oct. 19. Because of its self-liquidating nature, this venture continues to assist entrepreneurs.

"With the wide array of insightful seminars and success stories, we are hopeful that the Expo will help develop the entrepreneur in every Filipino," Garbo concludes.

Small businesses ...

From page B4-1

as he is forced to buy smaller quantities of inventory more frequently, missing out on discounts he might otherwise get if he had the cash to buy greater volume.

"The upshot of this is when your credit line dries up — your costs go up," he said. "And then, as you realize your credit lines have dried up, the costs have probably happened as a result of your customers on you start tightening up on how much money you're going to allow them to owe you." The potential ripple effect of each and trade contraction loom large for Tonya Jones, owner of general contractor Jones & Associates Construction in Nashville, Tennessee, who worries about payments coming from customers who owe large sums.

"If one of my customers gets in trouble and can't get their cash ... it could threaten my company," she said.

Some of the business owners who spoke to Reuters said they thought their credit woes would prove fund. And all said they expected to weather the storm.

Main Street was widespread

A recent survey by the National Federation of Independent Business ranked inflation and weak consumer demand ahead of financing as the top two worries of small companies, said William Dunkelberg, organization's chief economist.

Other polls, however, indicate credit problems are widespread among small businesses, which employ more than half the nation's nongovernment workers and account for about half of U.S. gross domestic product in the private sector.

A survey this month by American Express, which has tracked small business with card-based sales since 2000, found that 43 percent of companies with fewer than 100 employees faced credit difficulties, up from 30 percent in August. Some 12 percent plan to close by the end of September.

Geoff Perlman said his 12-year-old computer software company, Real Software Inc., in Austin, Texas, weathered the previous bust of the 1990's, but he feels the current climate is "far more troubling." "We've been in business since 1996, and in all that time I've never had to lay off an employee because of financial reasons," he said.

Reuters

Jeweler with golden touch ...

From page B4-1

WEDDING rings

We just did all that experience to mark where he decided to get out of his uncle's shadow and put up his own jewelry shop by Adriano Jewelry Art—in 1982 with an initial manpower complement of three goldsmiths and one peddler.

Adriano's capital was the P15,000 he earned from the sale of a ring with a horseshoe design that he customed himself and his then fiancée, Ana.

"My first shop was a really dilapidated space, just three meters by six meters big. It was really nowhere," Adriano recalls.

But from that small space came hundred pieces of jewelry that he managed to sell through word-of-mouth. Each satisfied customer would refer friends and relatives to Adriano and soon enough, he was forced to hire more people to handle the demand.

Adriano was already on his way when he made a load bet on gold and silver in 1981. He borrowed money to buy the metals while the price was falling from $800 per ounce spike. That increase did not happen like he wanted and he was left saddled with more debt than assets.

Panicked and not knowing what else to do, Adriano went to a fortune teller to check his future and was told that he will be successful. Unfortunately the fortune teller told him that he did not have a chance of turning around his bad luck.

But stubborn as he is, Adriano did not accept the prediction and went on with more confidence to prove the fortune teller wrong and be the master of his own fate.

"I worked harder, got more and better customers and I was on my way up again. I also learned from that experience to never use debt to buy assets and just to gamble that much money," he says.

"Good old fashioned hard work and diligence became his fallback as well his high standards for quality.

"I really try to put my best in every piece that we produce. If there is even a small blemish, I have a solution. I want everything to be free from any defect," he explains. "Sometimes, I will redo a piece three, four or five times before I become happy with it."

That penchant for quality coupled with his knack of customer service, helped build his reputation as a loyal, honest and dependable.

In 1993, he was named The Most Promising Businessmen of Mayumanyan by the Mayumanyan Ladies Club. And in 2004, he was recognized as the Most Outstanding Alumni in the field of entrepreneurship by the UST College of Commerce. The Bulacan Chamber of Commerce and Industry named him Most Outstanding Business Businessman in the Jewelry Industry and just last September, he was honored with a Diamond Achievement award by the UST College of Commerce and Business Administration for his professional excellence in his chosen field.

He also got his fair share of business awards.

In 2003, one of his finest designs was named Best of the Best in Ribbon Category in the Diamond Today Design Competition and in 2008, a ruple rank-lace named "Immaculate" won in the Otis Category of the Philippine Jewelry Association's Design Competition sponsored by the Mayumanyan Jewelry Association.

Also in 2006, his "Pinjank," a half-necklace representing the wings of an eagle, won the top prize under the All Precious Metals Category of the Guild of Philippine Jewellers' Jewelry Design Competition. This was followed in 2007 by another award from the Guild for his "A Flower Blooming with Years of Joy," a necklace in 18-carat white gold with yellow gold with medium of pearl and matrix lapis.

Adriano says he may be an old hand in the jewelry business but seeing customers appreciate his creations—especially his purchase line of wedding and engagement rings—still gives him a high.

This is why he is still the main designer of his growing network of Goldcrafts Jewelry and he is still involved when he joins wedding fairs and expos such as those mounted every year by Thresher Inc.

"For me, this business is not just about making money. It is also about making people happy with my pieces," he says.

7-Eleven bucks economic slowdown

PHILIPPINE SEVEN CORP. (PSC), THE operator of the 7-Eleven chain of convenience stores in the country, expects to continue to remain resilient for the rest of the year, amid concerns about rising inflation, and the pressing credit crisis in the US, which is threatening growth in emerging markets, like the Philippines, as investors and chief executive said difficult times have prompted consumers to buy from by place in convenience stores nearby, instead of going all the way to supermarkets to buy in bulk.

"The retailing industry is very much affected by the dire economic conditions to a point where supermarkets and malls are offering discounts. I think people in the middle income consumers are scrimping on their pesos," Dantes said in a statement. "But for convenience stores like 7-Eleven, sales of consumer items have not dipped as badly as those in supermarkets and groceries since consumers are now buying by piece instead of by bulk for their most basic household and other needs," he added.

From a record high EBP of 7.2 percent in 2007, the Philippine economy's growth slowed down to 4.6 percent for the second quarter of this year, dragged by rising consumer prices. Consumer prices rose at a faster pace of 12.5 percent as of August, from just 2.4 percent recorded during the same month last year primarily due to volatile food and fuel prices. But the worst seems not yet over, as the global credit crisis that started in the US continues to affect financial markets across the world, causing more capital flight as investors are reassessing risks and creating potentially adverse impact to the real economy as lenders become tight in their lending.

While other companies are bracing for tough times ahead, PSC is bullish about its chances. The listed firm continues to aggressively expand its operations through franchising, targeting to have 400 stores by the end of the year, from just 315 outlets as of the end of last year.

Fueling the aggressive expansion of 7-Eleven does not only pose a remarkable growth within the convenience store's financial positions, but also contribute to the national economy as well. "Every franchise is a new 7-Eleven store, we believe that PSC proposes a contribution to the economy," Dantes said. "Encouragement to our growth is the additional employment, more business opportunity for both the franchisees and suppliers."

A typical 7-Eleven store normally employs about 6 to 10 personnel depending on the size of the outlet. The number adds up as the national employment rate every time there is a new outlet opened. To date, 7-Eleven has a total workforce of close to 3,000 personnel locally, including the franchisee employed by franchisees.

Since 14 years ago when 7-Eleven first opened its franchise package to the public, the convenience store now has a total of 198 franchisees operating more than half of all 7-Eleven stores.

PSC attributes the rapid growth of its franchisees to the four franchise formats, namely the new store franchise, franchise conversion, service agreement, and property conversion which provide options for entrepreneur to choose from.

By strategy, 7-Eleven stores go to where the people are because they are visibility. But the stores, by themselves, have become natural magnets attracting people to assemble in the stores for whatever purpose.

PSC reported a net income of P764.83 million for 2007, almost three times more than the P28.16 million net income it reported for 2006. Franchise revenues rose to P2,043.74 million in 2007, from P118 million during the period in 2006.

Dantes said the company ended 2007 with 51 percent of its 315 stores franchised, up from 41 percent of 207 stores in 2006. "By the end of 2008, we expect that more than 60 percent of our stores will be operated by franchisees," he said.

BUSINESS Friday

Teleradiology gives birth to new medical industry

BANGALORE—ON A COMPUTER monitor in his office in the high-tech hub of Bangalore, Indian radiologist Arjun Kalyanpur examines a scan of the skull of a 6-year-old boy who fell off his bicycle.

A few minutes later, thousands of miles away, doctors at a hospital in Philadelphia prepare the boy for surgery after receiving an urgent e-mail from Kalyanpur diagnosing a subdural hematoma in the child's brain.

It's the middle of the night in the United States, but it's daytime in Bangalore and Kalyanpur and his team of 20 radiologists are reading hundreds of scans sent by hospitals across the United States during the night shift.

"This is the US find it difficult to staff at night.

There's a radiologist shortage in the US as well," Kalyanpur told Reuters.

Bangalore, the outsourcing capital of the world, is becoming a global center for teleradiology, thanks to a pool of Western-educated doctors, extensive outsourcing infrastructure, lower costs and a consistent time zone to diagnose medical conditions during the US night.

Teleradiologists in India read X-rays, CT scans, MRIs and other medical images of patients in the United States, Singapore and a host of other countries around the world.

It's ideal for hospitals facing ballooning costs and a shortage of radiologists. And it's not just teleradiology, experts say, just about every area of medicine that does not require direct patient interaction could be outsourced in the future.

This could include scans of pathology samples, ECGs, EEGs and other diagnostic systems used to determine a preliminary diagnosis.

"Telemedicine is on the rise," said Subash Thalasila, the CEO of Thirion Inc., a private equity advisory firm, who has written a book about outsourcing.

"There are some concerns, though, that it might lead to inadequate interpretations and even those in the industry admit that regulation hasn't caught up with technology when it comes to medical malpractice claims and legal liability.

Liability issues and malpractice issues pose challenges as this new industry expands without a supporting international regulatory framework as well as an ethical code of conduct. "In the end the challenge really is when you're doing something for the US and something happens, what's liable for it?" said Vedantha.

Night-shift, day-shift

The business is lucrative and already there are 14 or more teleradiology firms in India as well as several in the United States, some of which are listed companies.

Kalyanpur's clinic can make as much as $1,000 per scan, about 35 percent less than the price charged in the United States. With an average of 1,000 scans read a day, that adds up to hefty revenues.

Hospitals are in favor because by mapping it at night, teleradiologists in India save US hospitals the need to pay added rates on night-shifts, allowing them to cater on salaries.

"This kind of outsourcing, which is time zone-related, is very beneficial. The same job done as a day job is much more pressurized," Kalyanpur remarked.

Kalyanpur and his wife, Dr. Beatrix Shaberdeen, founded Teleradiology Solutions from a home office in Bangalore six years ago. Both are US board-certified physicians and are graduates from Yale University.

Today they have a 118-member team in a month, 3 more are up, when they provide radiology services for over 70 hospitals in the United States, 10 hospitals in Singapore, a few in the former Soviet republic of Georgia as well as hospitals and medical clinics in cities and villages across India.

"We make the process more efficient by using technology and time zone advantages," said Kalyanpur.

The standard time in Teleradiology Solutions for a radiologist to read an X-ray and provide analysis is 45 minutes. Exigencies are provided within 15 minutes for urgent cases, such as severe strokes.

Teleradiology has a sales office in Connecticut and radiologists in China, Netherlands and United States, who handle when the India operation is closed.

Remote locations

Ironically, India faces an acute shortage of radiologists even as teleradiology clinics spring up in Bangalore. The biggest players are Kalyanpur's firm and his main competitor Wipro Ltd., a leading software services exporter.

"We are currently focused on consolidating this service line and building our expertise in this area. This practice requires extra attentiveness to quality and access," said Ashutosh Palshetkar, of the clinical processing services of Wipro Technologies. The firm has five permanent radiologists and several who work part-time.

Indian hospitals, such as Apollo, Fortis and Wockhardt, are other players that are gradually increasing their imaging channels by sending scans for hospitals in the United States.

Other US-based players include Virtual Radiologic Corp., which provides teleradiology services to over 900 medical facilities in America. Highbrook Radiology Holdings Inc. is another US-based teleradiology company whose physicians are located in the United States, Australia and Switzerland.

Patients are not always aware their scans are being read abroad, although they are told if they ask.

"We act as an extended arm, offering 24/7 services, thereby enhancing productivity for the doctors and ED lab teams in the US," said Wipro's Palshetkar. "However, they are the finishing/ authority and quality approvals on our services." The teleradiology business has not penetrated into the Europe as yet, largely due to data protection laws in the European Union and difficulties in obtaining accreditations by authorities, according to an Indian government planning commission report.

"There are other issues as well... such as malpractice policies, liability measures and jurisdiction issues for settling disputes that might arise," said the report.

Kalyanpur feels teleradiology is just the beginning.

"Telecardiology, telepathology, teleneurology, teleradiology and robotic telesurgery," he said, naming a few.

Regardless of whether the medicine is practiced in person or remotely, the most important factor for patients' care is the quality of the doctor doing the diagnosis.

"The first and the foremost requirement here is a qualified doctor at the other end. That's very important," said Sharma.

Reuters

AS ECONOMY falters, thrift stores are seeing a surge in business as Americans look for ways to save money. AFP

Small businesses squeezed in credit crunch

LOS ANGELES—THE TURMOIL on Wall Street is aggravating tough economic times on Main Street as small businesses, accounting for half of US private sector goods and services, begin to feel squeezed by the credit freeze.

Newly tightened lending requirements imposed by some banks are putting added strains on companies already coping with a slowdown in consumer spending since the housing slump took hold some months ago.

Hardest hit are wholesalers and inventory-driven retail businesses, such as hardware and electronics stores, appliance outlets and car dealerships, said Eduardo Martinez, an economist for the Los Angeles Economic Development Corp.

Such companies frequently need quick cash infusions to restock inventories, expand business or meet payroll during slow periods or between collections from their customers, Martinez said.

"It will be harder today than it was a couple of months ago to get access to short-term loans," he told Reuters. "It's another challenge that companies are facing in a very tough, very bleak economic environment."

Tightening consumer credit has likewise taken its toll, especially on sales of cars and other big, ticket items.

"The most difficult part of all this is it continues to put the onus on business owners to work more as hard as get somehow more what we were getting before," said Carolyn Lefebvre, chief executive officer and owner of Phoenix-area auto parts supplier Southwest Autocare.

Her company's credit line was slashed in late July by about 40 percent, from $300,000 to $50,000, which "caused significant problems for me."

'Tightening up'

Mark Strong, owner of a Philadelphia area electronics parts manufacturer, Al Electronics, said one bank recently shut down his credit lines altogether after 13 years.

Michael Davis, 39-year-old, he faces thinner profit margins

DOW JONES

LIFESTYLE Fashion & Beauty

Also: Thelma Simon San Juan

Contributing Editors
Apples Aberin-Sudlmeier
Jenni Epperson
and Ria Francisco-Prieto

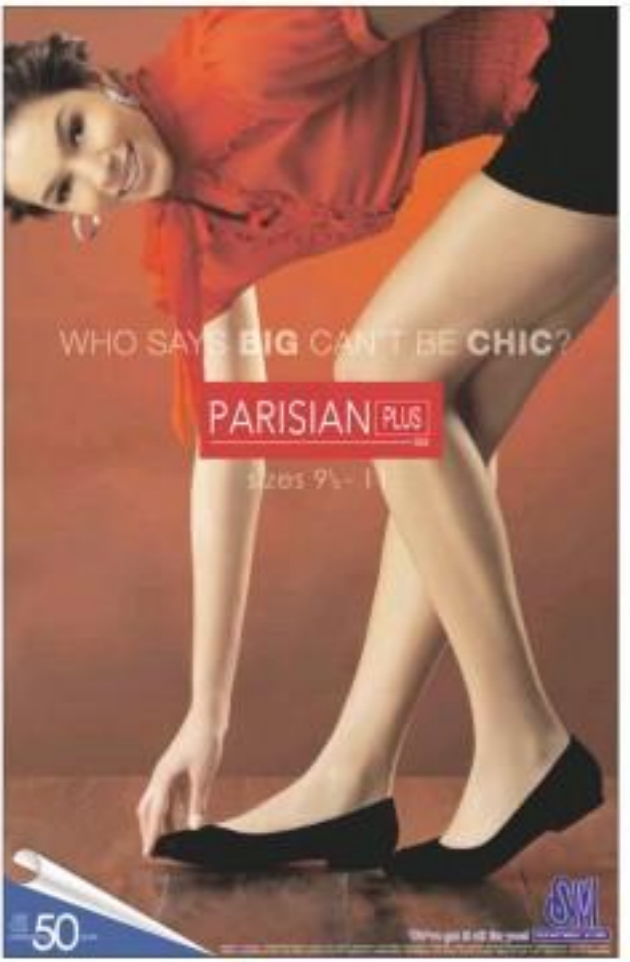
Young designer shows her stuff

Cum laude graduate of Los Angeles design school catches the eye of fashion industry

By Leera Elena Angbue-Te
Contributor

TWENTY-ONE-YEAR-old Sassa Jimenez, preparing for Philippine Fashion Week, gives off a fresh vibe and talks in a delicate voice, apparently wise beyond her years.

Having grown up in a household that loved the arts, Sassa has always wanted to express herself and make something beautiful. She grew up experimenting with film, painting,



Young designer shows her stuff

From page C1

cooking, writing poetry, even editorial and advertising.

"But I have chosen fashion," she says, "to be my main outlet because it is enriching. I've enjoyed it for a long time. It's what I am most comfortable with and where I find my ideas flowing out most naturally."

Her parents, Jabu and Abby Amores of Antipolo Rizal, have undoubtedly influenced Jinson's inclination towards the arts.

"I rarely find inspiration in concrete things. It comes more from feelings, emotions, my thoughts—really a collective effect. I create more simple clothes when I'm relaxed and designing becomes a more evident process when I have a lot going on in my head."

Amos took the two-year Fashion Design program of the Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising (FIDM) in Los Angeles, California. She was in her freshman year at Ateneo de Manila University, a Creative Writing major, when she decided to apply at FIDM.

Studying abroad

At 20, Jinson packed her bags, set off for LA. (Her area intimidated at first, and—"I also felt small. Literally. Everyone was so tall!"

"But then I got to know more people and eventually started spending time with new friends."

FIDM is the alma mater of Monique Lhuillier, Nick Verreos and Isaac Mizrahi. The Fashion Design program prepares students in all aspects—sketching, design, draping, pattern drafting and even computer applications.

Jinson remembers her last exam as one of her most memorable experiences. "The exam was for a sleeping class I loved dearly because I learned a lot from the class and the teacher. My mood was very raw due to the whole time, which was hard to imagine because of the many deadlines, stress and time constraints." She graduated cum laude.

Soon Jinson is joining the 11th Philippine Fashion Week Spring/Summer Collection on Oct. 23, 4 p.m., at Function Room 4, 3rd Floor of the SMX Convention Center at the Mall of Asia.

She will showcase a 45-piece collection.

RUFFLED-neck dress

JINSON will showcase a 45-piece collection at the 11th Philippine Fashion Week.

JINSON'S alma mater, the Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising in Los Angeles, California, counts Monique Lhuillier as one of its most successful alumni.

A PIECE from Jinson's 'Modern Feminine' collection

THE YOUNG designer grew up in a household that encouraged the arts.

JINSON makes sure each stitch is in place and the overall look she aims for is achieved.

A 'HOWLOWEEN Concert' on Oct. 31, featuring the Bandai Music Kids

Halloween treats in the mall

WHAT'S COOKING AT THE Shang this Halloween?

A musical extravaganza comes to the Shangri-La Plaza—pianos, sax and violin performances on Oct. 17, 12nn-9 p.m., and Oct. 18, 3-10 p.m.

The ultimate boutique hub for today's fashion-forward tweens, Sparkle for Girls, celebrates Halloween in style. There will be parlor games and all the boo-tiful girls' dreams are made of, on Oct. 18, 3 p.m.

Get ready for mayhem and magic as the Shang whips up a grand treat on Oct. 25, 1:30 p.m. Trick or Treat, magic shows, photo and food booths await kids at the Wizard's Magic Cauldron Halloween Party.

Treat yourself to a "Monster Concert" on Oct. 31, 3 p.m. as the Bandai Music Kids engage audiences with their music and glorious brand of charm.

Also in store this month is the Human Exhibit until Oct. 26 at the Shaw Hallway, Level 4, where a treasured collection of life-size images of the Blessed Mother will be on display.

See the mega cities of Southeast Asia in a new light as the UrbeSuperstar: Manila with Shangri-La Plaza hosts Snapping Invisible Cities," a colorful exhibit of German photographer Peter Bialobrzeski's workshops with young talents in six mega cities of the region. The exhibit, from Oct. 17-Nov. 7 at the Shaw Hallway, Level 3, features the works of 27 photographers, including eight Filipinos.

As its 17th anniversary offering, Ang Illustrador ng Bukasan (Ang IBK) presents Trabiho on Oct. 28 to Nov. 15. Feast your eyes on Ang IBK's masterful creations for the young and the young at heart at the Shaw Hallway, Level 4.

Lending color to a classic

SAFARI MODERNISTS fit: Wayfarers getting a multihued classic shades by using a dose of update that brings the shades colors, from popsicle orange to from classic to edgy. The Colcurves-ready pink. The Colorbrewed Playhavers come in red, Project uses the famous Ray-Ban green, violet or pink.

Watch it like Beckham

FOOTBALL SUPERSTAR DAVID BECKham goes for casual luxury as he confidently sports the Classics from U-Boat—arguably one of the largest and eminently the boldest watches on the market today.

Fusing colorful design expertise with meticulous, U-Boat combines excellence, innovation and timeless Italian craftsmanship that oozes it appeal to the fashion-forward guy.

Spotted in Vienna wearing a Highstreet timepiece was Yeis Cruise—his casual ease blending with the classic and understated appeal of U-Boat.

U-Boat is made in Italy. Contact 09178888 or visit www.uboatwatch.it.

BECKHAM with the Classico U-boat

52MM Classico A/113 in sterling silver

New RTW collaboration with Rajo Laurel

PLAINS & PRINTS UNVEILS A NEW COLlection in collaboration with designer Rajo Laurel.

The new collection is under the H.A.S. (Hich Aved Sensual) line.

"Collaborating with Rajo Laurel is definitely a dream come true for Plains & Prints. With his edgy avant-garde approach to fashion, the classic designs Indonesian have come to love about Plains & Prints just got more exciting and definitely more chic," said Rosanne Pardlan, owner of Plains & Prints.

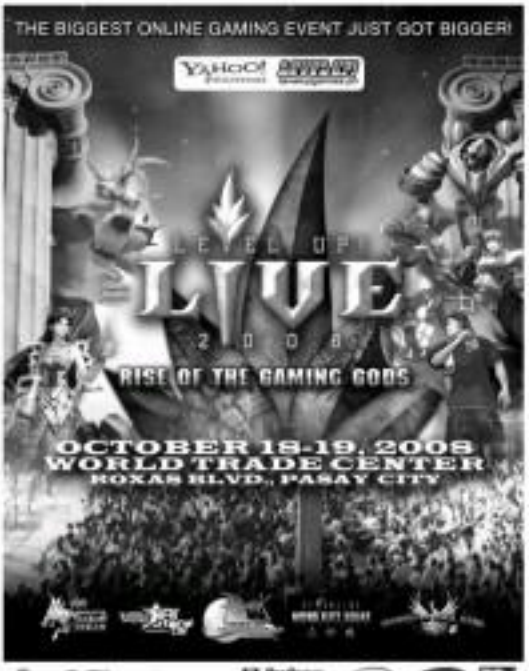
The Rajo Laurel designs for H.A.S. highlight romance and luxury.

"As a child, I would always dream of making everyone look and feel beautiful," the designer said. "The collection I collaborated with Plains & Prints is inspired by the women in my life and each piece is a reminder to the relationship I have with them. With chic silhouettes, women can express their individual fashion sense subtly in eclectic selection of designs and colors."

To introduce the collection, Plains & Prints has signed up Thai-British international model, actress and DJ Paula Taylor, who has gained popularity in Asia after appearing as one of the contestants in the reality show, "The Amazing Race Asia Season 2," last year.

Plains & Prints unveils the new collection and its new face on the opening of its newest store at the 5th Level of the Shangri-La Plaza Mall. The new collection will be featured in a fashion show directed by Jackie Aquino and organized by L.U.V. Pix Inc.

The Plains & Prints' H.A.S. Rajo Laurel Collection is available in store than 40 shops nationwide.



Fashion and art in one

Jean Goulbourn interprets the paintings of Emily Cheng

SILK COCOON RECENTLY launched a limited collection of barongs, shawls and ladies' fashion at cocktails hosted by Washington SyCip and Jean Goulbourn. Goulbourn has collaborated to bring art and beauty in a collection inspired by the paintings of New York-based artist Emily SyCip-Cheng, who was in Manila to launch her latest book, "Chasing Clouds, A Decade of Studies".

"Interpreting paintings on a big canvas is re-proportioning it to the size of fashion items," said Goulbourn. "Emily had to re-draw many of her paintings to fit into the shawls. And I had to be very careful about the colors of the threads to be able to stay close to her artwork, though I was given full freedom to do variations of colors on other color base that needed a new grouping of shades. We were able to retain the three-dimensional dynamics effect that gave the pieces so full of life."

The collection was a sellout and these limited-edition pieces are bound for New York by the end of the year for a series of trunk shows.

Silk Cocoon is at Renaissance Makati City Hotel, Greenbelt, Makati. Tel. 911-6888.

Zunic Success Story:

From size XL to medium

Featuring Ray A. Gapuz

THERE WAS A TIME when Ray A. Gapuz weighed 196 pounds, and was having an increasingly difficult time looking for sizes that could accommodate his 44-inch belly and size 12-14 XL jeans. That was in 1997, and over the years, he tried different kinds of diets and made frequent visits to the gym. He would shed off the pounds, but within a short period of time, would gain all the weight back again. With his hands-on approach to business and various traveling engagements, he couldn't afford to be called away from his many pressing priorities. He couldn't afford the regularity that the diets and gym memberships required. So much that although his career was flourishing, it seemed that Ray was doomed to remain an XL size.

The Discovery of Zunic's Safe, Painless, and Scientifically-Based Treatments

Fast forward to November 2007. Ray came across a newspaper article about Zunic, a new slimming facility which promised a safer, painless, and easier alternative to losing weight. He read on, and it excited to learn that the methods and technologies employed by Zunic are based on scientific research done by reputable international institutions Bridge Psychiatric Nursing Manor with an M.D. in Nursing and an M.D.S. U.S.A. In conclusion to boot, he was thrilled to know that Zunic incorporated medically-sound principles in their methodology. To Ray, this was medical fact, independently verified and confirmed, so get a slimming facility that was scientifically credible. I knew I had to give Zunic a try.

His first session was a consultation session with Zunic's Makati Center and after meeting with trained medical staff to discuss his personalized program, he scheduled for his treatment right away.

Presenting The New Ray A. Gapuz: After 3 ½ months with Zunic

Ten years was his battle with the bulge. For time, Ray was finally determined to shed off his many weight. With the assurance that his endeavors as a businessman, physical effort Ray would produce visible results in as little as 45 minutes, and that all procedures were safe, non-invasive, and virtually painless, he made a commitment to enlist with a session. Ray vigilantly underwent a personalized combined regimen of "Contouring", "Metabolique", "Body Sculpting", "Firming", "Facial Lift", "Cellulifter", "Cellu-Sweat", and "Lipo-Lift". Six weeks later, he had lost 35 pounds and was sporting a fabulous 32-inch waistline.

"Imagine the delight and surprise of my wardrobe, family and friends! Some colleagues couldn't believe that I lost so much weight without going under the knife and were convinced that I had liposuction. Most of taking my shirt off to show them that I had no surgical scars whatsoever, I just treated them to a good laugh and clap that body was by Zunic!" laughs Ray. "So, I recommended Zunic to all those non-believers so they could see for themselves.

"But above all, I myself was amazed. Zunic was able to fulfill everything they promised! All my weight-loss goals were achieved in just 3 months and 2 weeks. I felt absolutely no pain during my treatments, and even' how my stresses were zero. I has around 2 ½ cm around my waist. Before me, I measured 6 inches, and the results were just unbelievable and easy. I always left Zunic feeling very good about myself."

True enough, everyone who has seen Ray A. Gapuz lately cannot help but comment on his complete transformation. From his original XL-sized 196-pound frame, and 44-inch waistline, Ray lost a total of 35 pounds and 11 inches around the waist, and is now back within his normal BMI range of 165 pounds, thirty-nine inches, just one. At the garden events at Zunic, achieved her Ray who was years of continuous weight loss success could see. No doubt, when Ray wishes back into his favorite dress suits, whatever clothing he selects to his liking, will fit. After all, from his humble XL-fitting size 12-14 above, he is now a slim and sexy size 5. And all this, thanks to Zunic.

Visit Zunic today at any of their three branches for a free, confidential consultation. Zunic is open from 8 am to 8 pm, Monday to Sunday.

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Makati Avenue, Makati City

ALABANG
771-2300 or 771-5500
G/F Town Plaza
Madiguay Avenue, Alabang

QUEZON CITY
374-0000 or 374-0800
G/F Newgrange Building
Timog Avenue, Quezon City

Zunic
slimming & body sculpting

Stylish women's staples

SHOES AND HANDBAGS AS WOMEN'S fashion staples are showcased at Robinsons Department Store's all-new Liberte collection.

An exclusive label from Robinsons, Liberte is a stylish selection of reasonably priced quality shoes and bags.

There are classy sandals with staple straps for after-six nights-out with friends, and flats with floral designs and ribbon accents for a touch of whimsy that go well with skinny jeans and sexy tops.

Bags are modish, dynamic and fun-loving. Drawing inspiration from pop culture and the latest trends, there are colorful totes, leather bowler bags, leather doctor's bags with front pockets, ruched canvas shopper totes and floral print satchels that can hold everything, from gadgets to books, makeup and other must-haves.

For the campus fashionista, Liberte bags give a safer option for young women to create a perfect balance between fashion-forward and modest style.

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 4772 Series of 2008

The Home Depot Group
LOYALTY CARD PROGRAM

home depot

INDIVIDUAL LOYALTY CARD

The Home Depot recently launched its Loyalty Program intended for its regular and premium customers. It is a progressive type of loyalty reward program wherein members get to accumulate points and the more purchases the member makes the more milestones they reach with equivalent rewards within a validity period of two years.

A Loyalty Card Member must present his Loyalty Card each time they make a purchase. Transactional amount will then be automatically recorded to their account in the computerized membership database. Unlike other loyalty programs, their account will never go back to zero unless it exceeds its validity period of 2 years.

In short, the more you buy, the higher milestones you reach and the more rewards you get to claim!

The said program is currently applicable to purchases made at any of the branches of The Home Depot, Ortigas, Alabang, Manila Bay and Baliwag. There are two more upcoming branches located in Balintawak - EDSA and San Fernando, Pampanga that are slated to open in a few months.

-MEMBERSHIP

There are two types of memberships, both types nonetheless have the similar policies and benefits.

- INDIVIDUAL CARD

For Walk-in Customers (homeowners and retail customers) - all they have to do is present their original proof of purchase (Cashier/computer generated receipts or sales invoices with a total minimum net amount of P50,000 accumulated within one year.

- BUSINESS CARD

For Business / Commercial / Trade Professionals - Under this category, all trade professionals and enterprises are automatically qualified to be a member of the Loyalty Program. (Please refer to a detailed list of requirements with any of Home Depot's Customer Service Department).

-MILESTONES

These are the rewards computed through a certain purchases. Rewards will be instantly delivered to the members' preferred mailing address once he reaches a milestone. Prizes range from gift certificates, travel packages to various appliances and gadgets.

-OTHER PERKS

Loyalty Members will regularly receive complimentary copies of Home Magazine, the industry's leading home interior and construction magazine. Home Magazine is published by The Home Depot.

Along with this, members will also get updates about upcoming events and discount promotions.

-IMPORTANT NOTE

The Loyalty Card is for Milestone accumulation only. It is not valid as a discount card. However, requests for such discounts can be processed and approved at the Commercial Sales Department of any Home Depot branch. For more information, visit any of Home Depot's branches.

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KATHY Huang's barely-there makeup and simple do are very age-appropriate.

LIFESTYLE Fashion&Beauty

Easy glamour

THE DELOS BALL WAS LAST Saturday, and Manila's most elegant women got dressed to the nines.

I love going to events like this to people-watch. That alone makes it worth the trip. So I tried my hand at on-makeup-and dressed Dietrich Lorenzo's genius of a gowns.

Beautiful people inspire me, and I also get many new ideas from fellow guests.

What surprised me the most is how barely there makeup was the look women seemed to opt for, and rather it comes on hair—a simple blow dry or ponytail would suffice.

KNOCKOUT!

Ria Francisco-Prieto

HINDY Sarmenta glazes up her look with a swipe of red lippies.

RIT Zabat's pulled-back hair shows that a pretty face is all you need.

POPE Fernandez goes for a '50s glam do and glossy lippies to accentuate her full lips.

MARGIE Moran Poinsode proves that simple blowdry hair and light makeup are best for her ageless beauty.

EMMIE Lee looks sexy and glamorous with hair down and great lashes.

CRICKET Serrano makes flyaway hair and simple makeup look fashionable.

VICKY de Leon pops colors on her eyes.

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Look like a Hitchcock heroine

THE RETRO LOOK is back and is very visible in the hair and makeup trends for fall/winter 2008. Defined and structured eyebrows, metallic eyes with heavy black eyeliner and hard-edged hair-gundy lips are all the rage this season.

Drawing inspiration from 1950's Parisian glamour, the holiday collection of Make Up for Ever* revamps the look and makes it contemporary.

The look is called Retro Vamp, created by Make Up for Ever's international creative director, Dany Sanz. For the first Tiltouh Fall Winter 2008 collection.

"For this look, I was inspired by the elegance of Hitchcock heroines from the 1950's. I wanted to reinterpret these codes of femininity by adapting them to modern trends," says Sanz.

Recreating this glamorous look is made simple with the help of the creative director for Make Up for Ever (Philippines), Bobby Carlos.

Kelly Pita, Artists of the look

How to achieve the 'retro glamour' look

GLAMOUR at 40 never go out of style.

DEFINE THE EYES. The eyes are a blend of metallic gold and black eye shadows, intensified by thick black liner and long, lush eyelashes. The combination is dramatic, sultry and very feminine.

"Start off by applying gold eye shadow all over the lids," says Carlos.

"Then, using a black shadow, line the contour of the eyes and blend it outwardly by making a concave shape. Line the lash line and inner rim of the eyes heavily with a black liquid or cream liner. Complete the look by using three coats of mascara if false eyelashes are not available."

This look will especially suit chinitas as the contour gives definition to the eyes, making them appear bigger.

LINE THE LIPS. In order to get strong hard-edged lips, a lip liner is required. Choose a shade closest to your lipstick, and apply using upward strokes.

In this case, a dark red lip liner was used to match the burgundy-colored lips. Carlos warns us, though, that red or dark lipstick may not suit everyone.

"Women with generally full lips should stay away from dark to crimson lip colors if they do not want to focus attention on their lips. An alternative is to use nude to pink shades to subdue the lips."

For mestiza skin tones, a paler shade of red or brown lipstick will work better.

MAKE THE LOOK YOUR OWN. The idea is to be inspired by the look and not to copy it exactly.

"All looks in general are just a vision of the artist who made it and it's really not necessary for women to follow the exact peg. You may tweak it a little bit to adjust to your own facial structure, color and lifestyle," says Carlos.

Another way to wear the look is by applying just the gold eye shadow on the lids but still maintaining the dark liner to either black or brown.

PHOTOGRAPHER: GIRLS: MEGHANNE; MODEL: KELLY; HAIR: MARIA; MAKEUP: BOBBY CARLOS; CLOTHES: PRIVATE COLLECTION; HAIR, MAKEUP AND STYLING BY CARLOS PRODUCTIONS

HUGO XX and Hugo XY

His and hers fragrances

HUGO UNVEILS ITS FIRST HIS-and-hers scent, Hugo XX & HUGO XY.

A fragrance for him, XY exudes irreverence and sophistication. Opening with a fruity, refreshingly green accord of pear tree leaves, the fragrance develops to reveal a distinctive, aromatic green bouquet featuring crushed ice, basil leaves, and mint. The result is irresistibly clean and fresh yet extremely masculine. Base notes of Lebanese and cedar wood create a woody dry scent down with a hint of earthiness and the Hugo signature pine accord.

For her, XX is a smooth and luminous feminine fragrance with herbal as dominant note, which unfolds into a creamy floral heart of basmati rice and jasmine sambac. Sandalwood notes give the fragrance a gentle woody finish.

Worn in unison, XX and XY make a multifaceted and provocative match. They have unique bottles shaped like spray cans to choose for XX and to burn incense for XY.

Prices: XX in 50ml EDT at P3,150 and in 100ml at P4,150; XY in 60ml EDT at P3,160 and 100ml at P4,000.

Hugo XX & XY are exclusively distributed by Ramon Market Ing Corp.

DNA study provides anti-age breakthrough for skin care

NIVEA'S DNAge skin care line

THE SIZE AT WHICH OUR skin ages depends up to 80 percent on external factors, like excessive UV exposure, stress, smoking and diet. Over the long term, the deoxyribonucleic acid or DNA in the cells' core becomes damaged. However, this DNA is the foundation for all cell renewal processes—making it essential for healthy and young-looking skin.

Experts in Nivea's research facilities have discovered that as one ages, the capability of the cells to renew themselves in order to maintain healthy skin cells decreases. When these damages accumulate, they result in wrinkles, fine lines, sagging skin, and age spots.

When you're in your 40s, certain areas of your face will manifest more defined aging signs for different values you want younger—deeper wrinkles, sagging skin, age spots, crow's feet, and laugh lines that develop due to the facial expressions you use through the years.

The revolutionary Nivea Visage DNAge works at the level of the skin's DNA to stimulate the renewal of healthy skin cells from within and protect it against future external damages. It uses the groundbreaking combination formula of Rohi Acid, a Vitamin B that is proven to improve cell regeneration, and Genistine that supplies energy to the cells during the regeneration process, leading to healthy skin awareness, smooth body skin, and firm skin resistance.

Nivea Visage DNAge anti-age care system is comprised of day, night and eye cream that work to improve skin's firmness while visibly reducing wrinkles, fine lines, and age spots. DNAge Day Cream replenishes the skin to make it look smoother and firmer, and is enriched with SPF 15 to protect it against harmful UV rays. To supplement the day regimen, Nivea also has DNAge Night Cream which accelerates skin regeneration that naturally occurs at night leading to a smoother and firmer skin in the morning. Nivea also offers the DNAge Eye Cream which reduces wrinkles, fine lines, and puffiness in the delicate eye area—a part of the face that shows telling signs of aging.

For anti-aging in specific areas of the face, Nivea introduces Nivea Visage DNAge Zone Action, which targets the special zones of the face where aging becomes more prominent. It provides in-depth renewal action while fighting wrinkles on the forehead, cheeks, mouth, and neck area. This ultra-concentrated rejuvenating action intensely re-plumps the skin, making it visibly firmer. Enriched with light reflecting pigments, Nivea Visage DNAge Zone Action improves skin elasticity and reduces wrinkles in just minutes.

New toner for firmer, whiter skin

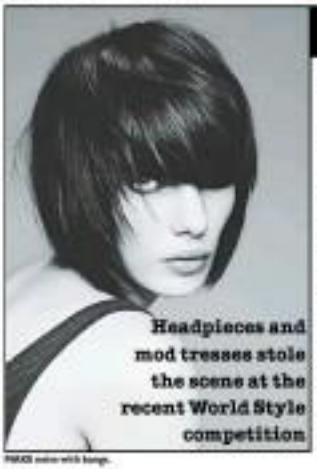
ELLTA White & Firm products

ELDEN PHARMA INC, A LEADING manufacturer of safe and effective controversial products, adds the new Ellta White & Firm Facial Toner to its Ellta White & Firm collection.

The products combine the powerful whitening and firming properties of Glutathione and Oats Extracts along with L-Carnitine and Lipolifter to ensure whiter, firmer skin.

The toner effectively removes excess dirt, refines and purifies skin's texture, promotes skin clarity and closes pores. This toner is best applied after washing the face with Ellta White & Firm Facial Wash.

The Ellta White & Firm product line also contains facial cream, pressed powder, soap, lotion and deodorant and anti-perspirant.



Headpieces and mod tresses stole the scene at the recent World Style competition

MIKAS soiree with bangs.

Hair majesty

MESSY UPDOS, mod hair and loose waves made news recently as The World Style competition was held at the Rockwell tent. The annual event gathered the most talented Filipino hair stylists to compete and exhibit their expertise in cutting, coloring and styling.

This year, headpieces rule the scene. Loose, haphazard, and cascading updos made for chic hairdos. Soiree and daring shapes were also extolled. Anthony Bihasa from Enzo's Salon was awarded this year's top honors.

While Bihasa was celebrating his night of glory, I took the opportunity in interview last year's winner, Lionel Branon. He represented the country in the Asian semi-finals, then moved on to represent Asia in Barcelona, Spain. There, he was ranked among top five in the world—another Filipino talent winning raves abroad.

Isabel Rivera, Backstage Pics

"I presented my every hated as the 'Grooms' category," recalled Branon. "My entry was called 'Guardians Of Eden.' There models were made up and dressed as Eunice's guardians. I created this look with the use of hair color, hair extensions and styling."

"Clothes were designed by Jun Garcia, styled by John Pesus and Charmaine Palermo. I was assisted by The Make-up Room in creating the intricately makeup, as well as Empluvio Salon."

IMPRESS with layers.

Hypothyroidism, the unknown condition

HAVE YOU BEEN eating less and increased your physical activities, but noticed you are not losing weight?

Have you been buying loose clothes only to find out in less than a month that they're becoming tight? Has the woman in the mirror become fuller despite your attempts to lose weight?

Sometimes the explanation to one's rapid weight gain is not simply excessive food intake, lack of exercise or slowing metabolism due to age.

If the symptoms are thinning hair, excessive sleepiness, constipation, exhaustion, swelling legs, dry skin, depression and cold intolerance, you are most likely suffering from a condition called hypothyroidism.

The thyroid is a butterfly-shaped gland found right under your Adam's apple which secretes thyroid hormones.

If it secretes too little, your metabolism slows down and you gain weight even with regular diet and exercise.

If it secretes too much, you have hyperthyroid. Your metabolism speeds up so you keep on losing weight without even trying, but you cannot sleep and have high risk for heart attacks. You sweat excessively, your eyes bulge and suffer from goiter.

Either way, you need to see a doctor.

If you experience weight gain along with two or more symptoms listed above for hypothyroid, it is best you see an endocrinologist who will prescribe the necessary medication and blood test.

Those of you who think they will save money or avoid the doctor by just taking diet pills, exercising more and eating nothing... you may die of starvation but still be overweight.

Ask your family doctor or call your hospital to recommend an endocrinologist.

Something wrong

When the formerly effortless 10,000 steps a day became an ordeal for me because I was just too sleepy all the time, when despite my weight-loss efforts and frequent trips to the bathroom for elimination, I would still shave in five pounds a week to my frame, I knew something was wrong.

I also noticed one day that I could see most of my scalp and hazee day how I looked because combed on this tool.

Depression set in when people kept teasing me about my pilling on weight. I refused to leave the house and see others people.

I also found I could not consume any thing that is processed

Betty La Fea's Bea Alonzo on the cover of the premier issue of beauty mag LOOK

BEA Alonzo is LOOK's maiden issue cover girl.

MAKE YOURSELF OVER WITH over 150 hair, makeup, skin, fashion and health solutions in the premiere issue of LOOK, the magazine for every Filipina who wants to look and feel her best. I Love Betty La Fea star, Bea Alonzo, graces the cover of the ultimate beauty and style magazine that explores beauty from all angles. Be the first to wear the hottest hair and makeup trends for Fall 2008 and get the top skin and hair care tips from four of the beauty industry's biggest personalities. Also in the jam-packed first issue, beauty queen Precilla Mirafiore, TV host and model Angel Ando, and commercial model Bianca Alcaraz-Eliasbit sensibly confess and dispel the myths on being born beautiful, while actress Angel Aquino and supermodel Tweetie de Leon-Gonzales bravely face the camera without a drop of makeup!

LOOK's September-October 2008 issue also includes veteran journalist Marge Enriquez's investigative piece on the not-too-pretty side of cosmetic surgery—the botched procedure. Read about the repair work that goes into these surgical slip-ups, and get insider advice on how to avoid these operations from hell. And health expert Nadine Enrico covers all bases in a comprehensive guide to eating healthy while eating out.

Delightful essays, helpful hotlists, and hot product how-to-haves round up the maiden issue by Hinge Inquirer Publications.

Grab a copy at your favorite newsstands or call 922.0784 or 759.2833 today and save P144 for annual subscription!

What women really want

MEDICAL RESEARCHERS INDICATE the "buzz" of a woman's sexual organs affects her sexual drive. Other women suffer from "sexual dysfunction," a term used to describe difficulties in libido, arousal or orgasm that is vexing to women or their sexual partners.

Now, Filipinas can talk about concern gynecology more freely.

"Cosmetic gynecology refers to procedures that enhance the sexual experiences of women. Some women go through the process as gifts to their husbands or partners. But they go through a series of screens and tests, as well as interviews and have to convince me that they are doing it primarily for themselves," said Dr. Abe Montelaque, a cosmetic gynecologist and medical director of Beverly Hills GYN Located at 6750 Ayala Ave., Makati.

More open

Filipinas today are becoming more and more open to revolutionary surgeries to enhance their physical attributes.

In Beverly Hills GYN for instance, the Laser Vaginal Rejuvenation (LVR) is fast becoming a popular service to clients.

"These days 'flower arrangement' has become revolutionary with the advent of laser technology," Montelaque said. "Women who have given birth several times such as OFW as a modern remedy for them to feel tighter. Most of the complaints include elongated or redundant labia minora or the inner lips of the vagina. Designer laser vaginoplasty (DLV) is the solution—a vagina that would look like the way it was an age 18."

The procedure necessitates specialized tools and expertise. They become more confident of themselves, becoming even better wives or girlfriends to their partners.

"Sex is an integral part of a healthy relationship. Women just need to embrace the fact that there are several ways an event to sexual bliss. Sexual pleasure is proper. It's nothing begins with the 'flower'," Montelaque explained.

The doctor, however, warns that esthetic must be coupled with orders. In the past, he himself had to deny surgery to a couple of women "because they are tight" and instead advised on how to enjoy the pleasure of sex through mastic exercises.

"It is a very sensitive and difficult process but it is safe. It is important that your doctor has the expertise to do the procedure," Montelaque said.

Furthermore, women who wish to go through any type of aesthetic surgery should be discerning. Where they go to a clinic, they must ask for the doctors' credentials. Expertise and experience are crucial, Montelaque said.

DR. ABE Montelaque, second from right, with the women of Beverly Hills GYN

LIFESTYLE Fashion Beauty

Pinoy behind Visionaire rues home country

Stephen Gan finds 'too much' drama in RP and he says he's had enough drama in his life

OMG! At the Lacoste headquarters in Paris: "I would love for the country to prosper."

Text and photo by Cherie K Moral

GET IT TOGETHER.

That's Stephen Gan's advice to Filipinos. Gan is the Philippine-born and -raised founder and creative director of the fashion and art publication Visionaire, V Magazine and VMAN.

"I don't know what you're doing, but I would love it if everyone did something about (the country)," Gan said during a recent interview with Philippine Journalism in Paris to discuss Visionaire's collaboration with the Lacoste brand, which is celebrating its 75th year. He smiles emphatic pronouncement came after hearing John Mosey's account of being pressure when an unnamed car rammed into the lobby of a five-star hotel in Makati City in November last year. It was a failed attempt to overthrow the Arroyo government.

Seeing the global PR of Lacoste, who here to discuss possible promotional event with Sierra Sportsclass Inc., Lacoste's exclusive distributor of apparel and accessories, the was a guest at the hotel.

"That thing really annoys me," Gan said. "That's why I don't go back often. Each time I go there, there's some kind of drama. I have enough drama in my life!" His last visit was over 10 years ago.

Gan, who's in his early 40s, left the Philippines to his youth to study at the Parsons School of Design in New York City. His fashion career has been as stellar as they come.

In his mid-20s, he worked as fashion editor of trendy magazine. With one of his best friends, fellow Parsons alumnus and now world-renowned makeup artist James Kaliardos and former model and current Parsons visiting professor Cecilia Dean-Ussi founded Visionaire, an edgy fashion couture of fashion editorials, in 1991.

Gan launched V Magazine and Visionaire Gallery in New York's SoHo in 1999. Two years later, he would be asked to join the American Vogue's Runner as creative director. He stumbles into the job, he was given the Creative Visionary Award by the Council of Fashion Designers of America. In late 2003, he launched VMAN. His multi-counterpart of V Magazine.

"I would love for the country to prosper," Gan said. "I grew up there. Everything I know about fashion, I learned it from. You read Vogue and Harper like everyone. You keep up. Every time I go back home, I talk to people and they would know more about what's going on in the fashion world than I do."

When he was in Parsons, Gan recalled he would come home on Christmas holidays and spend time with his friends. When there are problems with the economy, he observed people tend to look the other way and "concentrate on parties."

"Then there's no electricity! There's a sense of disconnect. There's no patriotism," he said. "I'm saying this in a positive way and not a critical way. It'll be comes out as bitter, I don't want it to."

Gan added: "There's so much going for it, being the only English-speaking country in Asia... It's incredibly Western and modern in some ways, and somehow it's not utilized. People from there are very smart, very worldly, conscious of what's going on [in the world]."

"So that's my message: Get it together."

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*See merchandise in your favorite Shopwise branch for more details.

EMELY Lopez in a sizzling ballgown by Escada

HYLA Crespo Villanueva in a capsleeve gown with sweeping train

MARGARITA Delgado in a simple silver beaded top with flowing white chiffon gown by Ivan Reyes

ANNAMITO Lhuillier in a chic black two-piece by Monique Lhuillier with deep-sea Tahitian pearl and a diamond necklace

JEANNE Goulbourn, Mediterranean-exotic in separate two ballgowns by Rik Cuenco

MARICRIS Vasquez Prada in an eye-catching creation by Ivan Reyes

MARVIC Madrigal Vazquez in a grand ballgown with cape by Jojo Lorenz

Going gaga over 007 watch collection at Big Apple

EVERY CHIEF OF ALTHEIS, IRON Rolf's party rates cheap-cheap into blockbusters where every day promises one big bash after another.

After jetting into the Big Apple with Qatar Airways, the action began for us the following day.

Our host was top chef Learky Bayocos of the New York Restaurant School. We did fashion-watching by day and restaurant-hopping and clubbing by night.

Another host was vivacious Cristina Valdez, who has made a fashion statement with her year-round cowboy boots.

During lunch at the excellent Republic Restaurant eight stands in Union Square, I asked her, "Where did you get this super Rolex watch?"

"Oh, it's the latest accessory you must have," she said. And she was so right.

The following day I read in several dailies and listened on television that the Hollywood pack and New York scene are are going gaga over the fabulous James Bond Collection of Swatch!

Even during the Mass Amoebic doom, I noticed three Hollywood celebrities wearing different versions of the James Bond Gold Finger collection.

Early the following day I made a dash to the huge Swatch Shop in Times Square and lo and behold!, there was a wall for the entire James Bond Collection.

Salesgirl/model, I grabbed the Rolex type from the Gold Finger series, with the 007 logo on one side of the links.

My other friend's choice was the Thunderball series in matte black enamel bezel with 8 categorical white crystals.

You must also check out the other watches...The Spy Who Loved Me, License to Kill, Quantum of Solace, Casino Royal and the 6th Die Another Day.

Now the good news is the James Bond collection is now in Manila at the Swatch Shop at Glorietta 2 where it was totally sold out!

But a new batch is in today, so grab your ladies they run out of it again, pulongges. It's only a conversation piece.

DIE Another Day from the 007 collection

BIG order: Gold Finger from Swatch's James Bond Collection

SWATCH: Thunderball

Ball of 'have more's'

Without a doubt, dubbings, the hottest ticket and most glamorous affair last Saturday was the glitzy seventh year anniversary of one of Asia's top lifestyle magazines, the Philippine Tatler, remember?

It brought me cosmopolitan Manille's crassiest, and I mean the crassiest of the crass, from the social set who came in their most gorgeous gowns and formal black suit.

As rare young women belonging to the

FASHION plus: Apples Aurrie Sadhwani in a Mura Kalo ballgown

LIZZIE Eder Zobel in a gorgeous square-gimp gown by Irma Soriano

JESSICA Wilson in a superb body-hugging gown by Charisa Sarao

FELY Ammas in an elegant ballgown by Raja Laurel

CELINE Lopez in a sleek and slinky gown by Dennis Lustico

ANNA Gonzalez Tuason, Chanel Hunt, Michelle Pantoja, Marsha Gonzalez Hamerson, Tina Cruz and Joe Rosario

JAYLEN Magbanua, Madge Lejano, Honey Pascual, Chinkie Agregado, Anna Ty, Pilar Tuason and Lina Ty

GETTHE sexy guys, "I Will Survive," and those gals have. Alice Orbaiceta, Ivy Mergal de Dios, Rio Romero, Via Reyes, Jing Nacelis and Margo Jamilla. Front row: Liberi Viruta, chair Beth Bermudez, Kara Alkuino and Beatrice Gimenez

GEORGIA del Rosario in a Bridal Veil gown

YOUNG mavens and shakers behind Wedding Bells magazine. Nina Ramos, Mabi Dingiaan, Maia Matute, Ana Gloria publishers Maria Araneta and and Pilar Tuason, and Marivar Lim

Going gaga over 007 watch . . .

From page E2

pursery power in a Galleon show, hosted by the gorgeous Monica Arnaiz-Eliasaldo and Miguel Rocha, pulongpo.

The big moment, unrivalled, was the unveiling of the magazine by Yours Bella, the brilliant young woman behind the magazine.

Wedding Bella is the newest magazine of Bella Luce Publications, by her publisher Maria Antonia and Pilar Tuason.

Wedding Bella seeks to provide "the most fun a stylish yet no-nonsense guide to marriage and married life for brides-to-be," said Antonia.

"Wedding Bella is prepared to spare no effort or expense on her wedding, honeymoon and future life," she added.

To which one witty gentleman present whispered in a friend, "Wish A wedding usually means lots of showers for the bride and cocktail time for the groom!"

Cheers! cue laughing.

Check out Wedding Bella at www.weddingbella.com.ph.

The magazine is a quarterly publication and retails for P295. The maiden issue has just hit the mag stands. Check it out, pulongpo.

Pink Kitchen

Pink Kitchen is back at Rockwell First, pulongpo, from Oct. 14-19. Fifty hot top chefs will be dishing out their favorite meals.

DOING E3

ARMANTO Lledo, Tereza Mendoza, Conie Arsenio, Maria Rocha and Nila Wate

Going gaga . . .

From page E3

SIENNA Rankin in New York!

"The entrance fee of P200 for adults and P100 for children below 10 years old will go directly to Ateneo Diliman, the Philippines' first community-based breast cancer screening program under the auspices of the research center 'Anatomy'," explained Bettina Lopez-Hernedez.

Order tickets online at pinkbitches09@yahoo.com or at the gate on the day itself, pulongpo...

EYE-CATCHING! Lovers Ross Mesenegro and Angela M. Arroyo

MICHELLE Pfiffner in Jun Escario

NICKELODEON'S MISCHIEF MADNESS AT SM MOA

It's double the mischief and double the madness at the upcoming Nickelodeon Halloween party, the Mischief Madness! This is happening on this October 31 from 3PM to 9PM at the SM Mall of Asia Music Hall. This spine-chilling event brought to you by the SM Mall of Asia in partnership with Nickelodeon and Toy Kingdom, showcases the Mischief Maniacs that will test the courage of every kid who dares to enter and explore its dark scenic rooms. Be as brave as the Nickelodeon characters Avery, the unflinching Avatar, and face the unnerving creatures that lurk inside this haunted manor or be as smart and funny as the girl who was saved by Hugo, Cosgrove Cousins. Dubbed the naughty twins, Edgar and Ellen in their ghoulish glee, devise the Pet Prank and other game stations like Feng Around a Firearm, Slime Dunk, and a whole lot more. It's going to be one amazingly weird all fun of Halloween night-ghost experience. Disney Infamous and possessed Swing of Avatar get to meet and learn more about the awesome clan. There will also be photo-op portals used by those who want their picture taken. Don't miss this kick-spooky event and come in your most frightening to fabulous costumes for the chance to win exciting treats. Be sure to watch out for the amazing fireworks at 7PM.

Hurry, and get your free ticket to this event! Be a Halloween participant of P1,000 of any toys and Halloween items at participating Toy Kingdom or Toy Kingdom express stores from October 1 to 31 and have a chance to Halloween with Nickelodeon's mischief-magnet characters at SM MOA! See posters for more details.

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LIFESTYLE Fashion&Beauty

Contributing Editors
Apples Alberto-Eudlimart
Jenni Epperson
and Nia Francisco-Prieto

Gold, metallics are your best bets

In fashion, as in world economy, they're reliable. Mix them—think your chemistry class' periodic table

THE LEGGINGS

GOLD AND OIL GIVE A GLIMMER OF hope in this global recession. Even in fashion, metallics and shiny shirk fabrics are the good old reliables again.

Calvin Klein and Donna Karan showed metallics —bronze and pewter—in their Spring/Summer 2009 collections.

For metals, think periodic table chic texture...gold, silver, bronze, copper and mercury, and just like chemistry class, combine them.

In the holidays, they are your best option to make that drop-dead entrance. Just stick to muted silver-gray, bronze and black, then peer a lot of lace, silk and skin to be given the metallic treatment. The result: feminine fluidity.

Black is back. To make it less somber, play up its frisky: Opt for metallic bustiers and "tulip" shorts, with fabrics such as shine-coated silk, vinyl, lurex and other synthetic material.

Shirtal leather has also come back in a big way.

One of the biggest advocates of this trend is Nicolas Ghesquière, who sent ornamented, high-gloss lurex dresses down the runway for Balenciaga.

Versace also created silky-black ensembles, while Calvin Klein celebrated period with silks and sleek eyelashes.

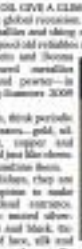
Here, the hip, progressive Folded & Hung will unveil its latest style collection Oct. 23 at A'Motae, Makati Avenue.

It will show my 100 models, each expressing his or her personal style, using upcoming trends.

The Seventeen for 2 fashion show will have four looks for the season: the "Lollipop" or fun prim on prim styling; "Stained Sticks," which emphasizes the under with heavily styled belts, bubble skirts and cholesterol patterns; dreamy, soft silhouettes in fluid metallics, called lovingly called "Washed Metallic;" and "Vibe" style, with simple volumes on the top and interesting at the bottom.

Expect a lot of drama, for it is the news or in the fashion radar. Nothing boring about the coming season at all.

E-mail the author at jbaltazar@inquirer.com.ph



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RADYO NG BAYAN

FASHION BUZZ
Hot, haute, hot news!

Take 4 for Fashion Watch Quartet

FIGURE FOR MORE IDEAS! Fashion and high tea at Makati Shangri-La Hotel this October as Fashion Watch Quarter rolls out its last series featuring designers Mon Strong, Joey Samson, Jose Antonio and Cesar Gaupo.

The first installment of Fashion Watch Quarter featured the collection of Albert Edin. Co-hosted by Patricia Glue, Gino Bocassini and Cory Santiago.

The second series had Mike Dela Rosa, JC Hamilos, James Reyes, Oj Hidrey, Axel Barcelo and Jojo Green.

Series 3 showcased Raju Lazaro, Dennis Llarina, Ivy Carrera, Lulu Tan Gan, Wendy Pabilonia-Terrence and Ann Evarito.

For Fashion Watch Quarter Series 4, Mon Strong's creations will be shown Oct. 28 and 30, Joey Samson's Nov. 4 and 6, Jose Antonio's Nov. 11 and 13, and Cesar Gaupo's Nov. 18 and 20.

Fashion Watch Quarter's production team is led by producers Joji Dingcong and Mec Gaan, with the help of project director Patrick Rosas and his creative makeup team, and project coordinator Grace Molina and photographer Patrick Uy.

Call Makati Shangri-La Restaurant Reservations and Information Center at 8486868 or 9128888 extension 7588 or 7586.

JOEY Samson

CESAR Gaupo

PABILONIA Ramos

ALEX Strong

SUNBERRY Luxury bags

New arm candy

BURBERRY gives bag fanatics something new to rave about. The newest additions to the brand's accessories collection is the Burberry Lowery bag, which debuted at the Burberry Autumn Winter 2008 catwalk show.

It takes inspiration from the mood, spirit and color palette of works by the British artist L. S. Lowry.

Texture is a key feature in the Lowry bag with the use of pleated silk grain, tooled calfskin, ignoma, deerskin suede leather with metal stitches and sprayed-on, tarred leather. The color palette echoes the muted yet spirited hues of the Autumn-Winter 2008 collection, with its ready-to-wear pieces in smoky, dark colors, racing green and fuchsia.

Each Lowry bag is equipped with lined pockets for holding mobile phones, MP3 players, PDAs and luxury essentials.

In the Philippines, Burberry is exclusively distributed by Luxury Specialists Inc. and located at Greenbelt 5 and Power Plant Mall.

Available in Watsons, Robinsons, Mercury Drug stores, Shoppesa, Gaisano, Ever Bilena Direct Sales Dealers and all leading dept. store nationwide.

IT'S TIME FOR THE GREAT 3-DAY SALE!

The Great 3-Day Sale is happening on Oct. 17, 18 and 19 at SM Megamall, SM City Bacoor, SM City Baguio, SM City Bicutan, SM City Manila and SM City Marikina. Time to shop for big bargains and fantastic deals. Bring the whole family and have a fabulous time!

SM MEGAMALL IS YOUR PLACE FOR GREAT DEALS!

Start your Christmas shopping list tonight. SM Megamall is all set to offer great deals and great discounts at the Great 3-Day Sale! Nights at the Marilla are filled with delights customers up to 50% off on a wide selection of merchandise—from clothes to shoes to home accessories to head to the mall now. It's the perfect time to shop for Christmas gifts for friends and family!

BIG PRIZES, BIG DISCOUNTS AT SM CITY BACOOR!

Visit SM City Bacoor and discover a wide range of items on sale! Most outlets are offering discounts of up to 50%. But that's not all! You can also take home amazing prizes at the Great 3-Day Sale. Earlier this week, a raffle coupon for every P500 purchase using a SM or Metrobank Credit Card. Take a break at the SM Food Court and get one raffle coupon for every P500 you spend. Bring friends to SM Cinema and get a raffle coupon for every 4 tickets. And then, play a few rounds at your favorite video game at the Entertainment Center. For get one raffle coupon every time you buy P50 worth of tokens.

SHOP NOW AT SM CITY MARILAO!

Located along MacArthur Highway, just a few minutes from NLEX, SM City Marilao is your convenient shopping hub this holiday season! And now, you can avail every single discount in our 500,000 sq.m. with over 200 mall outlets at the Great 3-Day Sale. It's your chance to grab the perfect gift for your mommy, daddy and of course, your honey. Sure, the sale would last long!

THE COOLEST DEALS ARE AT SM CITY BAGUIO!

Shop for great finds, great bargains at great prices in SM City Baguio. Over 248 mall outlets are offering up to 50% discounts at the Great 3-Day Sale, that means a wide selection of items to choose from. And with Christmas coming sooner than you think, there's no better chance to get started on your Christmas shopping!

BUSH, BUSH, BUSH TO SM CITY DAVAO!

SM City Davao is the place to go for top finds and even more top deals during the Great 3-Day Sale. You can enjoy up to 50% off on bestsellers for you and the family, plus numerous and delicious treats for the whole family. It's only happening for 3 days, so there's absolutely no time to waste!

SM CITY BATANGAS IS WAITING FOR YOU!

With discounts of up to 50% on an amazing array of merchandise, now's the best time to visit SM City Batangas. Pick out a new outfit for the office Christmas party, or stock up on toys and gadgets for the kids. Whatever you're looking for, you're sure to find it at a great price at SM City Batangas.

SHOP FOR DEALS AND WIN PRIZES!

It's not just great deals that are waiting for you at the Great 3-Day Sale. You can also win great prizes in the form. Just shop at your favorite mall/store using cash or your BDO Credit Card and get a raffle coupon for every P500 you spend. You can also take home one of 5 Panasonic Washing Machines or one of 4 Panasonic Refrigerators. Hurry, the sale is on for only 3 days!

Get Kate Moss' glam-rock style

SOFT, ethereal, edgy

KATE MOSS'S SEVENTH COLLECTION for Topshop epitomizes her eyeless spirit and rock 'n' roll attitude.

While introducing comfier, ethereal quality for Fall 2008 through light and feather chiffon dresses and delicate chiffon blouses, her trademark provocative style is apparent with glam rock stripes and biker denim.

Studded leather jackets and skinny wet look trousers give the collection a harder edge, while Moss's iconic swallow tattoo is transformed into a directional motif, flowering across pretty muslin tunics.

Key pieces in the collection include a tee dress that is perfect for everyday wear. Dress it up or down with beaded shoes or flats and you're all set for a hip getup.

Perfect for the cool weather of the season, relaxed and easy-to-wear cardigans with a chest detail will lend a subtle lift to your outfit.

Get a classic Kate Moss glam-rock style, try striped jersey pants or jeans to make your legs look longer.

When paired with feminine and stylish blouses you are all set to go for a night of fun and style in the city.

Robinsons Specialty Stores Inc. is the exclusive franchisee of Topshop. The Kate Moss for Topshop collection is available at Robinsons Galleria, 3/F Mall of Asia and Greenbelt 5.

KATE Moss in Topshop's latest collection

HIGADO lace top and butterfly cape

Baddeo's passion for pink

WOMAN TODAY ASIA'S RECENT silver-anniversary festivities highlighted breast-cancer awareness via a fashion show that focused on pink, the color of the campaign.

Maverick fashion designer Eddie Baddeo showcased a collection that had Ayala's Triangle awash in burgundy, magenta, rose pink and fuchsia as supermodels and upcoming mega-magazine cover fab eye-catching ensembles.

Shanna Berjoque was in silver-gray Mikado with silk organza lace top and butterfly cape.

Kia Bolivar was in a green and leather combo/blend, while Gino Taglo wore a green satin beaded lace in the waistband.

Also showcased were an ethnic-beaded number, brocade-beaded and suit-beaded cocktail/hand gowns.

They were joined on the runway by breast-cancer survivors. The cheering audience included magazine publisher Cecilia Ramos-Lorenzo, general manager Monica Arco and editor in chief Maria Pascual Magpe.

Still going great after 22 years in fashion, Baddeo will unveil his 2009 spring/summer 2009 couture collection on Grand Allure Night, Oct. 28, at the Philippine Fashion Week at the SMX Convention Center.

His collection will be inspired by women of substance such as Precious Arroyo, Cory Quirino, Imelda Marcos, Loren Legarda, Winnie Monsod, Mitos Dalmacio-Santiago, Amina Rajal, Korina Sanchez, Vilma Santos, Cri Delos, Grace Padaca and the late Bernardo Bitanga.

Call 571/5643 or e-mail eddie_baddeo@yahoo.com.ph

LIFESTYLE Fashion&Beauty

How Kaye combines substance and style

The Working Class

Nina Silayan Go,
Lifestyle Writer

From being a banker to being a mayor's wife, she bares the style and work ethic of a cosmopolitan

BLACK fashion knit dress by Kenneth Cole

THE RARE AND REFINED breed that is the cosmopolitan woman is the product of a solid education, exposure to the arts, and logging in miles of travel.

Combined with the right values and talent, ethics in the workplace, the blend yields a personality that showed sound and in this city and again, shone we reflect this contrast with poise, tender style and wise quality.

Such woman can Kaye Chua-Tinga, Mayor Rufino Fortinbras and Bernina Yan Ge.

Kaye graduated from the University of the Philippines with an economics degree, then took her MBA at Fordham University

How Kaye combines substance and style

From page G1

New York.

She then worked in Hong Kong with Citibank and Banque Indosuez, a French bank, doing private banking. She considered to live in Hong Kong in the early part of her marriage, when her husband started a multi-level-e company which eventually expanded to Singapore and Malaysia.

Enjoying the interesting environment and fair pace, she hung on to her bank career until family life and property took the better part of her life.

She gave up that career for family—as wife to Tagaig Banco Penal Thapa and a mother of four. She does in volunteer work, she's enjoying the shift in priorities and copes with her domestic and commercial responsibilities with the same intensity she had in the corporate world.

Community work

Her community work won recognition when she received the Citizen Banner Award for the most outstanding nutrition program.

She also handles a daycare program, livelihood training program, Gawad Kalinga housing program, refurbishing and the largest preschool education program in the country.

Kaye owns such diligence and dynamism to her parents, who were active about education and work and who did not allow short cuts and delegation of duties.

Growing up, she and her siblings were expected to keep a high GPA while still performing personal chores. She has never been one to do remote-control management.

It's easy to see how she manages her time. Homebodies, the couple avoids nights out to be with the kids. Usually up at 5 a.m., she keeps a fitness regimen—boxing, Pilates and badminton.

Given this active lifestyle, Kaye favors flexible skirts and flip-flops. This casual style and her charm make people feel at ease with her. She believes it helps people realize that substance is better than form.

Casual

Casual jeans are a favorite, paired with a variety of tops. She is road chic, like the women in her family. She hosts stores and outlet share a dress rule—why buy, when you can borrow! She is an draw to trends and prefers classic, well-made pieces that stand the test of time.

Kaye is comfortable in her own skin. That's because she is confident she has earned the right to do so. Succeeding in projects that uplift the lives of many, she is a self-made woman who relies on nothing but hard work.

In this time of global financial crisis, the world sure could use the drive, sensitivity, savvy for people in need...and sense of style—of women like Kaye who has given up the high-flying corporate world for social service.

She is a woman to admire, whose essence and style are inseparable.

SHORT SLEEVE mesh dress in black and white by Michael Kors

THE CREST pajamas by Dolce & Gabbana Tee for girls and baby doll top by Marc Jacobs, skirt and pants by Vivienne Tam. Kiddy's Closet Tinges overlay silk blouse and socks-leg in JP panels by Phil Vertin. Go Mermaid Ruffle Tankini/Bikini and dress by Marc Jacobs

SHORT SLEEVE mesh dress by Vivienne Tam and short-sleeve baby-doll dress by Elizabeth Dee

PIQUE baby-doll top by Marc Jacobs paired with skirt and tights from by Vivienne Tam

Halloween parade

KIDS CAN PLAY THE PART THEY LIKE best for their Halloween Party or trick or treat events. Here are some great ways of getting into the Halloween groove from SM.

Fairy Tales and Mingled Dreams. Little girls can have a spellbinding time as little pixies sprinkling some fairy dust with charming fairy wings, wands and headbands. They can also be princesses for a day in costumes inspired by their favorite Disney princesses—Ariel of Little Mermaid, Belle of Beauty and the Beast, Aurora of Sleeping Beauty, Jasmine of Aladdin, and of course, Cinderella and Snow White.

GOTHIC Witch

QUEEN of the Nile

SKULL Warrior

A Cast of Characters. It's a whole new world as little boys and girls get to dress the cast of famous historical and fictional characters. Boys will have an adventurous day dressed up as Napoleon or Prince Aladdin, while girls get the royal treatment dressed up as the Queen of the Nile, a Gothic Princess, or a Southern Belle.

Tales from the Dark Side. If your kid thinks creepy is cool and haunting is hot, then let him or her have an old-fashioned ghoulish Halloween. Boys will thrill as a Ninja, a Skull Warrior or a Demon; while girls will have undead fun as a Witch or as a Zombie Bride.

All Halloween costumes and accessories are available at the Children's Wear, Character Shop and Children's Accessories department of all SM stores.

Lifestyle Asia's power issue

"INFLUENCE IS POWER, AND the kind that makes a positive difference is the only one worth exercising," says the Editor's Note in the October issue of Lifestyle Asia, now available on the stands.

The cover story features Dr. George S. K. Ty and his sons, Arthur and Alfred.

Also included are intimate views of Lali Aurora on President Macapagal-Arroyo, Kenneth Tong on George Ong, family friendships via Maria Prieto, Miguel Belmonte on Ramon Bellosillo, Marvi Sulcos on Imelda Gojunco, Jean Henri Ducilliet on Philippe Ducilliet and Hana Ito on Shoozy Ito.

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GOINGS ON

Search for Mrs. Philippines is on

THE FIRST COMPETITION FOR Mrs. Philippines is slated Oct. 17 at Alon Theater, Pasay City. Screenings will be held 11 a.m.–2 p.m., Oct. 15 and Nov. 15. If you are a married Pinay, 18 to 35 years old, at least 5'3" tall and with good body measurement, then you are qualified to join. Call 887-3055, 7057097

Gymboree Halloween

Gymboree Alabang celebrates Halloween with activities like face-painting, glitter tattoos, play-pay-by-prop-ics, trick-or-treating and book talk. Gymboree has also invited an ensemble band to sing the classics. The event is set Oct. 18, 1–6 p.m., at Cut-de-Sac in Westgate Center, Filinvest Corporate City, Alabang, Muntinlupa City. Call 771-1762/for a craigslist.

IT seminar

The Association of Special Libraries of the Philippines (ASLP) will hold a three-day seminar on information access. Techniques and strategies on Oct. 22–24 at Java Hotel in San Segundo Avenue, Lyway City. Sonny Monte Call Cely (PNB) at 8302 37 local 4411 or e-mail cemty@philhoc.com's Bill Bella, 831 0312, emdumo@meta.gov.ph. Cela (Dilgan Foundation), 831 1239.

Korean cooking demo

Maya Kitchen and a guest Korean teacher will explore the best of what Korean cooking has to offer on Oct. 18, 9 a.m.–2 p.m. Check out Low-Cholesterol Baking, 2–5 p.m. Lecture on Nutritional Baking is also included. Visit The Maya Kitchen Sunday–Saturday at 95, Liberty Building, A. Arnaiz Ave. (Pasay Road), Makati City. Call 892 1135, 892 3011 local 106, e-mail contactus@themaya-kitchen.com.

Polymer seminar

Hands-on introductory courses on figurine-making, fiberglass, stained glass and other polyester resin products will be held Oct. 23–25 at Polymer Products (PHI) Inc., 11 Jose Bonifacio St., Bagong Ilog, Pasig City. Call 87 39631–39.

Unraveling ballroom

Studio 174 Dance School is a pioneer in group classics in international standard and Latin ballroom dancing and dancesport team training, will hold its maiden recital and variety show Oct. 24 at the AFP Theater in Quezon City. Call 81 28823, 813 1449.

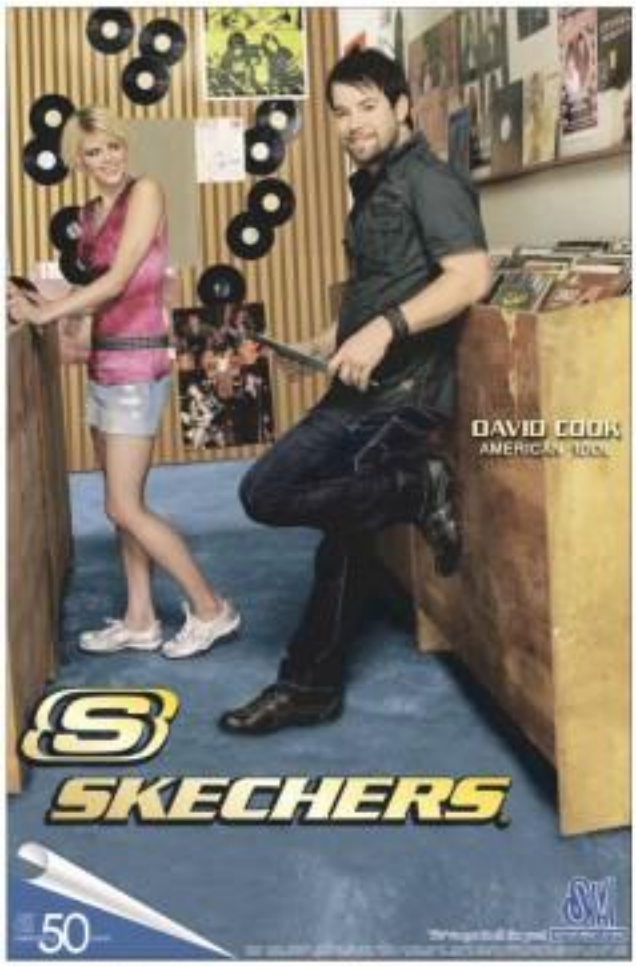
Abstract exhibit

The Museum at De La Salle University (DLSU), Yuchengco Bldg., Taft Ave., Manila, presents "The Meaning Beyond the Surface" until Nov. 5. The exhibit examines Philippine abstract art from the 1950s–1990s through the works of H.R. Ocampo, Vicente Manansala, Cesar Legaspi, Nonoy Tabiana, Manuel Rodriguez Sr., Botong Magsaysay-Ho, Fernando Zobel and Arturo Luz.

Also part of the exhibit is "Ang Mikmanding," a satellite exhibit of Metropolitan Museum of Manila, ongoing until Jan. 13, 2009. It's a tribute to National Artist Fernando Amorsolo. Call 5244611 local 350.

FACE OF THE YEAR WINNERS

This year's Male Face of the Year was John Paul Ngaotan, a De La Salle University student. He also bagged the Cover Boy Award from Artec Publications. Leonard Marvin Cruz, a PUP student, got the Hair Discovery of the Year award. He was also named Mr. Ever Bilena. The Female Face of the Year went to Divina Bruce-II, a 20-year-old lass who worked as a model in Japan. She was also voted Miss Cover Girl. Model Discovery of the Year was Princess Joy Palma, 16, from the Philippine School of Business Administration. She was also voted Best in Swimsuit.



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LIFESTYLE

New surgery provides what amounts to an internal bra system, minus the silicone or saline implants

CAREFUL Mother with Dr. Alfredo Velarde Calleiro (left) and Dr. Alberto del Rosario

Permanent lift to sagging breasts

By Rowena C. Borgo

A WOMAN'S BREASTS change over time; they often lose their youthful shape and firmness. The changes along with loss of skin elasticity can result from pregnancy, breastfeeding, weight fluctuation, aging, gravity and kneading.

Take the case of Lucina Muñoz, 54, who gave birth to a son 14 years ago. Since then, she has started wearing wonder bra to lift her breasts.

"After giving birth, my breasts sagged. Bagsak talaga!" Muñoz, an interior designer, says.

It's when a friend, who underwent breast lift surgery or mastopexy, breached the idea, Muñoz "got carried." She immediately visited her friend's doctors, Alfredo Velarde Calleiro and Edwin del Rosario of Divine Center for Surgical Aesthetics.

After a few days of consultation and medical examination, Muñoz was given the thumbs-up for a surgical breast support in the form of a permanent internal bra system, which restores breasts to their natural youthful shape, without the use of silicone or saline implants.

Introduced in the Philippines by doctors Hans de Benito and Siegmund Johannes of the International Society of Aesthetic Plastic Surgery, B'Wire is the country's first answer to solve the pressures, which even

PERMANENT | 4E

35 years of making women sparkle

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Thoughts on Golf and Life

By Hagi Pamfilo-Jacob

I THINK ANY GUY WHO SAYS THAT LIFE AT a corporate executive is hectic probably can't think of anything busier in life. Why stress the obvious?

It was when I was in the middle of my pre-chat routine while I fiddled my fingers to my "perfect grip", focused on my teardrop and commanded my muscles into the perfect position, visualized how the ball would fly perfectly in the air and land right on target, and wiggled my club perfectly (3 times for luck!), when Cris jolted me back to reality with this: a nonverbal comment delivered with the utmost timing — that perfectly missed my shot.

Kenneth, Marc and I started to ignore what Cris had said, and even if we gave cue with an otherwise perfect day of golf. But since he had already opened a can of worms, it seemed like making

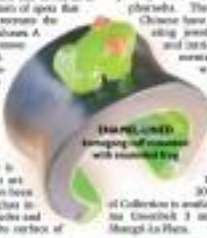
Wynn Wynn Ong's one-of-a-kind enamel jewelry

WYNN WYNN ONG'S new Yuga Holiday Jewellery collection for Picasa and Bidaya is rendered in enamel—finding century-old techniques with modern technology to create deep glazes in modern, cutting-edge colors.

Unlike the familiar old Fourney pieces that have shattered many a mother's jewelry box or vanity tray, the luminous bodies of Ong's new pieces are sturdy, in shades of stone gray, ivory slate, steel and taupe.

Some are glazed with large asymmetric nubs, fuller than their quaint egg. Each gleaming have rings are mounted with an array of miniature, individual, brightly colored ceramic frogs in their enamels that reveal an intricate pattern of spots that ostensibly recreate the banks of rivulets. A sizeable, luxuriously-studded flamenco gecko flips over to reveal an underbelly in scarlet.

TEARDROP QUARTZ earrings with enamel-inlaying pendant on lilies



ENAMELLED hexagonal ruff ensemble with enameled frog

Enamel in jewelry is an ancient art. People have been creating glass in order to fuse powder and painting the surface of jewelry since the time of pharaohs. The earliest Chinese have been creating jeweled boxes and intricate cosmetic set of wired chrysanthemum pieces for more than a millennium, Ong's Holiday 2008 Jewels of Collection is available at Picasa Greenbelt 3 and Bidaya Shangri-La Plaza.

ENGRAVED rose gold and red lacquer beads and gold enamels from Indonesia (above and left) and silver bangles (right)

FILIGREE and granulated gilded silver and black lacquer beads

Molano jewelry exhibit at Met Museum

NECKLACE of assorted colored carnelian beads

By Josephine Dorong

CELIA MOLANO stages her 24th jewelry exhibit at the White Cube of Metropolitan Museum until Nov. 14, showcasing unique bracelets, bangles and necklaces made of old gold and excavated beads.

Skilled at blending excavated beads with old gold, this internationally renowned jewelry artist has exhibited her works in museums and galleries all over the world.

Her most memorable exhibit was at Museum Kampa in Prague in the Czech Republic, which the First Lady of the Czech Republic, Livia Klausova, opened on June 12, 2007, upon the invitation of Ambassador Merdeka M. Sabio.

Titled "The Art of Adorning It," the exhibit impressed the diplomatic community. On opening day Molano wore a Kenpo Tosmo retro-inspired with a coral necklace and assignment ruby earrings.

Rita Ledesma, former president and curator of Metropolitan Museum of Manila, wrote in Molano's exhibit brochure: "The exhibition at Museum Kampa in Prague is a tribute to the history of Philippine jewelry while being magnificently modern. It displays dramatic oversized necklaces, original pre-Hispanic beads and reproductions of gold fluids once worn by artists and powerful women."

The Hamamkonken Interiors Foundation and the Philippine Heritage's University published "Philippine Jewelry and Ornaments: the Art of Celia Molano" by the late E.P Peinador and the late Fess Parry in 1992, and "The Jewelry Art of Celia Molano" by E.P Peinador in 1996. The latter book was launched at Reserve Museum in Santa Ana, California.

Former Sen. Helena Benitez, who has always supported Molano's art, and National Artist Arturo Luz, formally opened the exhibit on Oct. 14.

Luxury against all odds

BASIC LENGTH trench, gray scarf-and-top, beige skirt and knee-high leather boots, all from Escada Sport

By Cleofe F. Moral

THE GLOBAL RECESSION may be in a slump, but the local luxury market is alive and relatively well.

"People need to buy all the time, but now they buy only when there's an occasion. The rich may not be as affected [by the slump], ... But well, they're still buying," says Hamilton Kua of Rustic Mode Inc., Philippine franchisee of luxury brands like Escada, Escada Sport and St. John.

Kua, who opened her first Escada shop at 6750 Ayala Avenue in Makati 15 years ago, launched the new Escada flagship boutique at Greenbelt 5 last week with a red-carpet fashion show attended by Jesús Labiste, president of Escada Asia Pacific. The swanky space joins Escada's other outlet in Shangri-La Mall. The event coincided with the opening of the Greenbelt 5 outpost of Escada Sport (which has moved from Glorietta 4) and 6A John.

Foreign media have reported Escada's profit losses in the recent months, but Escada in the Philippines has yet to feel the pinch. "We're surviving," Kua says. "It's not good, good, good. But it's not like nobody's buying. It could get better."

Unlike other designer brands, Escada has relied solely on the popularity of the apparel segment. The emphasis on success, flowing big sellers are dresses, a marked switch from

HAMILOLI Kua is flanked by husband Jolonis Kua (left) and Jesus Labiste, president of Escada Asia Pacific

TANGERINE "pickpocket" patent-leather bag

SEA FOAM green phone/handbag with gold accents

German fashion giant Escada defies the global slump—in Manila

Most colors have been a signature of the German brand, founded in the early 1970s by cosmetic tycoon Wolfgang and Margaretha Ley. Margaretha, who designed the clothes, established a preference for bright palettes in defiance of visual memories of her childhood in Sweden, where the northern lights washed in monochrom.

In the Philippines, Escada attracts women in young as in their 30s, though the core market is the 40-up. There are successful professionals, some politicians, movie stars or wives of tycoons, says Kua, though she's more selective about its drop customs of her loyal clients. She says it's not just the rich Chinese who are buying now.

"The market has become more sophisticated," she says. "They're well-traveled and they're familiar with the brands. They're also more health conscious, so they eat better and exercise. They like to wear clothes that show off their shapes. We have pieces that are barely covered but also conservative enough to wear."

A briefly required dress grants shoppers at the entrance of the Greenbelt 5 boutique. Kua tells it a "showpiece"; the price tag is a little over P350,000.

Kua adds, "What we're selling is a lifestyle. If you have a chic bag, shoes and jewelry, you must also have nice clothes to go with them."

TURQUOISE dress with lace detail, black long-sleeved turtleneck and thigh-high leather boots, all from Escada

Permanent lift . . .

From page H1

P100,000-P200,000.

The four- to five-hour procedure utilizes a mesh implant made from polyester, a biocompatible synthetic material which has been used in cardiovascular and other surgeries for over 40 years now. It has found its place in cosmetic surgery as an excellent material for permanent soft-tissue augmentation, according to the study of Brazjn and Johnstone.

"Polyester is a non-biodegradable material that won't cause any deformity. You can leave it inside the body and won't cause any allergic reaction. It's safe," Del Rosario says.

Because the mesh is constructed from feather-soft polypropylene, the Beehive's internal bra system "causes no breast hardening and is not palpable under the skin," Calleiza says. "The device cannot be felt underneath the skin, isn't the functionality of the breast affected."

"It does not impair any regular breast exam method, nor does it affect future surgical procedures like lumpectomy," Calleiza adds.

OPERATING room

RECOVERY room

Candidates

The Beehive is a highly individualized procedure and one should do it for one's self, not to fulfill someone else's desires or try to fit any sort of ideal image.

The procedure is best suited for women with ptosis (sagging or drooping) or hypertrophic (very large) breasts that require breast reduction. "The patient undergoing the procedure must be of post-child-bearing age and must be in an ideal, stable weight," Calleiza says. "She has to have medical clearance. We also thoroughly explain to her the procedure and give her time to think about it. When she returns, we explain everything again. Surgery usually takes place after three days."

"All surgeries involve risks," Del Rosario says. "So we identify risk factors like hypertension. It's also important that patients give us full disclosure of whatever medical problems they have or medicines they're taking to prevent problems."

After undergoing Beehive, a patient can stay overnight at the clinic or go home, Del Rosario says. But one has to rest for a week, at least. Smoking before and after the procedure is not allowed. When taking a bath, avoid the chest part from getting wet for the sutures to heal faster and to avoid accumulation of fluids on the breasts.

Antibiotics and pain relievers should be taken for a week. One should wear bra with no underwire for two to three weeks.

In the case of Mufios, who underwent the Beehive three months ago, the pain is "bearable." Three days after surgery she had a checkup and even went shopping. But she was not allowed to do strenuous chores during those weeks.

Scars

Since the Beehive device is within the breast taking up the weight of the breast tissue, one does not have any scars on the breast skin, as a patient will have scars on that area. Del Rosario says. But they will fade over time.

He adds that there is a minimal chance that one might lose the sensation on her nipples after a Beehive implant. However, the loss of sensation is usually temporary, with normal sensation returning within six months.

Calleiza also assures that the device will not degenerate over time and it does not need to be replaced.

In what sets Beehive apart from the traditional breast lift surgery?

"Breast lift gives good results but after a few years, the breasts will sag again. With Beehive, one's bra is inside the breasts," Del Rosario says. "With breast lift, the problem is the sutures won't hold very well. There's nothing to catch the breasts. With Beehive, the device anchored to the rib will carry much of the weight. And one of the drawbacks of breast lift is having more scars."

"Ang nipayuhang ng Beehive ay nakatayo ang breasts even without a bra," Calleiza says. "But what's important is we have a happy patient and a proud surgeon."

"I agree with Dr. Calleiza. I feel good with the result," says Mufios, who now wears sports bra or regular patch. "Next time, I'll try liposuction."

For more information on the Beehive, visit SPrima Center for Surgical Aesthetics at The Courtyard, 28 Sgt. Esguerra Ave., South Triangle 1103, Quezon City. Call 9296614.

JPEME'S hallway

Stylish digital photo frame

SONY ERICSSON UNVEILS THE DPF-100 Digital Photo Frame, a convenient, stylish and easy way to share important images with friends and family.

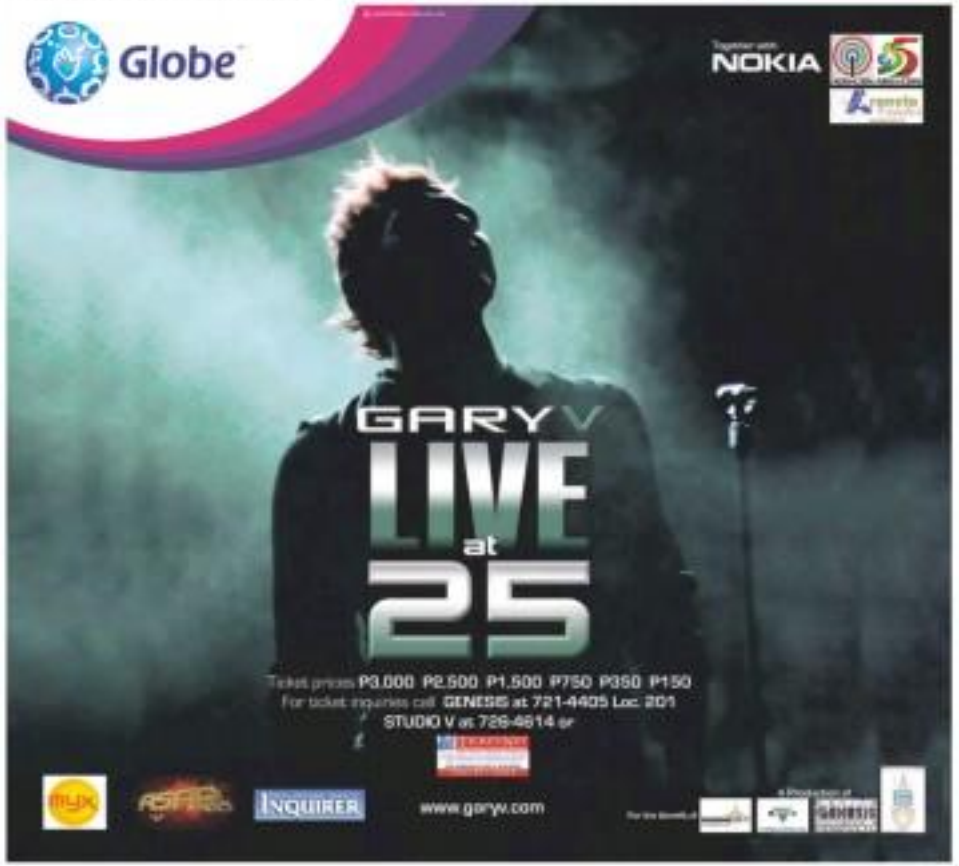
The Sony Ericsson DPF-100 Digital Photo Frame is an ideal accessory to the Sony Ericsson Cyber-Shot phone.

Transfer images in a variety of ways, Bluetooth, USB flash memory, MG card, miniSD, SD or MS Duo. With a sleek dark-gray finish, which adds style to any surrounding, this photo frame displays pictures in either landscape or portrait format and can be mounted on a wall or sat on a bedside table or office desk.

Once uploaded they are automatically resized, enhanced and resized to fit the frame.

The photos can be displayed and managed with the touch-sensitive control menu, just view the slide show options and pick your personal preference. In addition, the Digital Image Correction (DIC) included with the DPF-100 will ensure the photos are displayed in perfection as it automatically adjusts the images, including color correction, auto enhancement and edge enhancement.

The DPF-100 is compatible with all phones featuring M2 card, microSD, SD and MS Duo, USB interface or Bluetooth.



Rockin' YoU

YoU magazine, in partnership with Nokia, launches "Rockin' YoU," a night of fashion, music, and everything that expresses YoUrself!

For the youth, music is a big influence that helps define who they are. Music isn't just a topic of conversation, it also sparks the desire to communicate. This vision is both shared by Nokia and YoU magazine.

As the world's largest maker of mobile phones with music devices, Nokia teams up with YoU magazine's launch. A celebration of fashion and music, this event is a clear shout out to the huge potential of youth lifestyle.

William Hamilton-Whyte, general manager of Nokia Philippines, says: "Demographically, the Philippines is a young country. More than half the population is below 25 years old. For any large brand which seeks to remain relevant and distinctive in the market, being close to the youth is not only important but critical."

He further adds, "The youth today is extremely multifaceted, which make them a real challenge for any brand. For one, they reflect a great sense of balance. While they are individualistic in approach to life and their own motivations, they also reflect a strong collectivist mindset, which shows up in their value systems and attitudes."

The youth has always been a market Nokia always communicates to. They represent a demanding but loyal consumer who shares loyalty to products and services that fulfill their needs, solve their problems, and help them achieve their goals in life.

"Rockin' YoU," YoU magazine's launch in partnership with Nokia, is the coolest and most exclusive fashion show featuring creations of young and talented student designers from Fashion Institute of the Philippines, De La Salle College of St. Benilde, La Salle International, and School of Fashion and the Arts, Mika Abes, Nokia's corporate communications manager, said, "Nokia believes in the power of expressing oneself, in bringing out the real YOU. Our current devices are in tune with what the magazine is trying to convey: the dynamism of youth culture."

The night promises to be filled with fashion, cocktails, and live music from Up Dharma Down, Rico Blanco, DJ Mars Miranda, Nyshtravity, Sleepwalk Circus, and many more.

Check out these fashionable and trendy Nokia phones at Rockin' YoU! The Nokia 3600 Slide and Nokia 7210 Supernova bring the perfect blend of form and style for today's young, hip and free-spirited trendsetters. The Nokia 5320 XpressMusic is street-ready, giving you your music in a contemporary design.

Nokia allows today's generation to be creative and think out of the box – because it's not just a phone. It's who you are!

LIFESTYLE Fashion&Beauty

Contributing Editors
Apples Aberia-Sadhwani
Janet Eppersson
and Nia Francisco-Prieto

Trendspotting at Tatler Ball

No cookie-cutter dresses here, thank God—though black and lace reigned

Apples Aberia-Sadhwani

THE A-LIST WAS out in full force at Philippine Tatler's seventh-anniversary ball. There's hardly an occasion these days when women can glam it up in long dresses, sultrous and coiffed chic. This much-awaited yearly affair afforded Manila's stylish folk just that.

But frivolity was not the order of the day. Underneath all opulence ruled the red carpet as guests came in subdued gowns that were fashionable, reflective of their personalities. No cookie-cutter dresses here, although trends were strongly defined that night.

Black ruled. The black dress saw a variation of treatments and details—fringes, dangling and very minimal beadwork. Purple, nude and white were also quite popular.

Lace was another clear winner. Rovina Flavier, with her classic bob and barely-there makeup, turned heads in a long-sleeved, lace see-through barely three long dress. Gigabi Dimsol was in a nude-and-gold vintage time lurex. With the hard dress, going vintage or reworking old gowns is the way to go.

There was succinct for high-end items (a bottle of wine, a Chopard watch, Thai Airways tickets to Europe, to name a few) to raise funds for Synergia, a foundation that seeks to give public-school children quality education. Now, that makes this whole exercise worthwhile.

E-mail the author at aplatino@inquirer.com.ph

TRENDSPOTTING »

BEA Valdes in Irene Sunico

TINA Crespo in Bibiringka

NINA Huang in Irene Sunico

ERICA Carpo in Raja Laurel

ANGELIQUE Hamilton-Wiyin in Jun Escario

Not-so-basic black

The biggest trend of the night, the stylish set wore black dresses in all shapes and silhouettes, with various treatments and details.

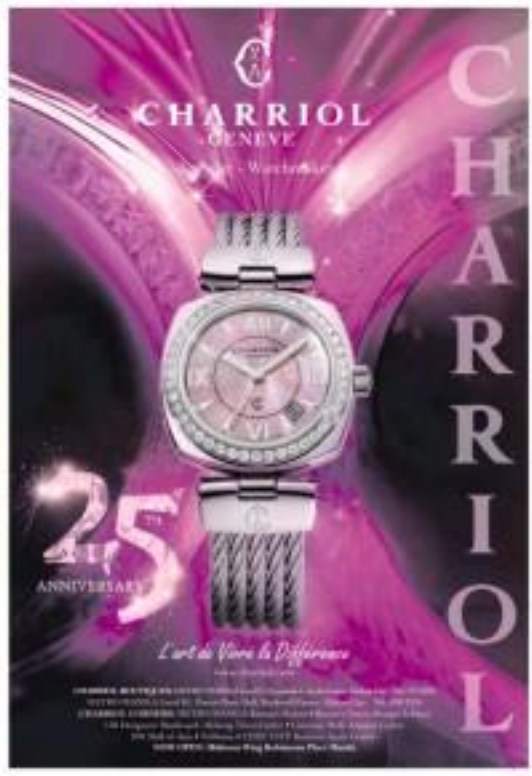
BARBIE Forteza and Jaja Daza in Albert Salo

MANDY Sarmenta in Irene Sunico

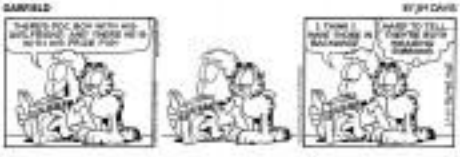
MAUREEN Chiong in Jessica Phi Chiong

White's right

Simple yet oh-so-chic, pristine white is a fashion pick you can't go wrong with.



GARFIELD — BY JIM DAVIS



A. LIPPH — BY JESS RIVERA

PUGAD BABOY — BY TY JUNOD

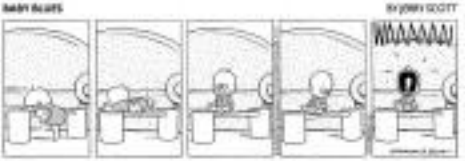
DICK TRACY

LOVEANDYS — BY ELIZABETH CHRONISTER

JAMES BOND

DIVINE COMEDY — BY STEVEN PERKINS

BABY BLUES — BY JERRI SCOTT



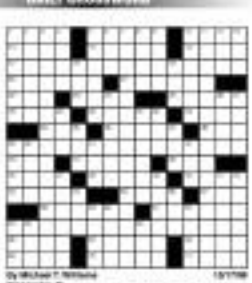
ATOMIC AND WENDY — BY LISA GARCIA LANO

FOLDOR — BY MARK COLL

RIKO MACHINE — BY MAGGIE AMSDEN

BEN — BY DANIEL SHELTON

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Michael T. Williams
October 17, 2008

Thursday's Puzzle Solved

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCES DRAKE

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis SudoKu By Dave Green

	1		2		3		6	
		2		9		7		
8								2
3								4
	9						7	
5								6
4								5
		8		1		4		
	6		5		9		2	

Difficulty Level ★★★★

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.

Tips and programs at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

6	5	1	9	4	8	2	1	3
2	8	3	6	8	1	7	9	4
4	9	1	3	7	2	5	8	9
5	7	9	1	8	4	3	2	6
1	3	6	8	5	3	9	4	7
3	4	6	7	2	9	6	5	1
7	3	4	2	1	5	6	8	9
9	6	3	4	9	7	1	3	2
8	2	5	6	3	6	4	7	5

Window-shopping at The Ramp

FASHION picks

GUCCA 3 lace work dress and Gucca architectural jacket.

WILDFLOWER checkered skirt and Ribbon Babydoll

HEAD TO THE BAR! At Cavanna's to wrap up the latest fashion trends. Jewel-toned dresses, checkered items and structured blush pieces are all available in this shopping destination for fashionable folks.

The items, though trendy, are all quite classic in look and feel. They're easy to wear and incorporate into one's basic wardrobe.

Update your look with a checkered top that you can match with simple jeans, blush trousers or a narrow pencil skirt. Or go for an architectural jet-black jacket that can steal-a-raise ordinary staples.

FAITH Hope Love tunic dress

SUMAN waterproof

KALACHUCHI

GUANGuitique

Pinoy culture in a bag

OH, LANDMY coin purse

INSPIRED BY A DESIRE TO create something different and to celebrate our heritage, interior designer-turned-bag designer Tarsila Tapales created the "Manila collection," a selection of totes that features Filipino fruits, vegetables, flowers and deliveries.

The unique and practical keepsakes are water-resistant inside and out, and ideal for grocery and the beach. They also make great gifts for friends who live abroad, as they offer a taste of Pinoy culture.

Tapales started designing bags in December 2009. "Designing bags was another outlet for me to create something beautiful. I've always loved beautiful fabric, patterns, colors and texture. After a well-received run of clutches from family and friends that Christmas, I decided to start a small home-based bag business."

After presenting her first collection in Summer 2008 under the brand Tarsila, the creative soul has been producing new designs every summer and the holidays. Aside from her classically elegant yet functional pieces, Tapales also offers baby bags that are available in Mom's & Baby.

Check out the Tarsila Manila tote at the following bazaars:

Global Pinoy Bazaar in Ayala Alabang Village at Cuenca lit., Oct. 18-19; Urban bazaar at Rockwell tent, on Oct. 24-25; and Ayuntopian bazaar at Intramuros, on Nov 25.

E-mail tarsilabags@gmail.com for orders.

Gandang PINAY

SOME GIRLS CAN'T DO WITHOUT

Khristine B. Gabriel

Whenever I go out, be it shopping, attending a party or even just family time, I always make sure I have lipstick on. Honestly, going without lipstick makes me feel naked! It's just something I can't do without.

I am such a lipstick addict. I have bought and tried almost all kinds of lipstick. My make-up kit is filled to the rim of the different kinds of lip glosses, matte, satin, cremes and mousses and more. So whatever the occasion, whatever my mood is, I have a lipstick to match. What can I say, I am a woman with discriminating lips.

Recently, I went on the search again for another lipstick. This time I wanted a lipstick with long-staying color while at the same time keeps my lips soft and moist. For these types, I would usually go shopping for lipstick at high-end cosmetic counters. From one counter to the next, I would leave unsatisfied until I passed by the counter of Ever Bilena Cosmetics.

Something caught my eye. The packaging was chic, sleek and sexy. Right away, I went over to the Beauty Consultant to ask about the new product. I was pleasantly surprised when she presented to me the Ever Bilena Silver Collection Sheer Lipstick. With one simple swirl of the elegant tube, I was amazed by the richness and sparkle of the color of the lipstick. As the lipstick is enriched with Vitamin E and moisturizer, it was assured that my lips would remain soft, supple and protected from harsh elements of the environment. To top off my amazing find, I was also presented with 11 more incredible shades to choose from. Perfect! I thought...a shade for my every move and mood!

After my purchase, I just couldn't wait to try it out. I was satisfied. The match is very for me. I have found what I have been looking for. And if you're still searching for the "right" lipstick, then perhaps Ever Bilena Silver Collection Sheer Lipstick is the one for you.

Tell me about your great finds. Email me at kris.gabriel@gmail.com.

MAT Florencio in Randy Ortiz

All lace-d up

Romantic lace took center stage as guests wore the delicate fabric in stylish ways.

MARY Yuvienco in Silk Cocoon

GRACE Baja in Ferdi Abad

TITCHIE Hagedorn in Jeff Jiordana

Trendspotting at Tatler Ball

From page 1

ALYSSA Gonzales in Mich Arnaiz

LUCILLE Lucsin in Dennis Lucsin

Purple reigns

Mauve. Lilac. Aubergine. All shades of this season's color du jour ruled the red carpet.

KATRINA Tarrosa in Vera Wang

JACKIE Cohen-Jarosch in Chris Diaz

CAMILLA Lucsin in her own design

MARYANNE Carmona in Auggie Cordero

BIANCA Zamora in vintage from Bebe

MARGA Valdes in an Irene Bebe and Boo Robles mini

TINA Fernandez in Rodgelly Mendiola

A nod to nude

Women of all ages donned nude dresses that flattered the skin tone and looked fresh and feminine.

ENTERTAINMENT

Edgar Evenia G. Velante

Read it every Monday in the Learning section
teen!

FIGHTER. Actress-comedienne will not back down from her fight with TV host Cristy Fermin who, meanwhile, has been suspended from her TV and radio shows on ABS-CBN.

Nadia 'ready for anything'

By Marinel R. Cruz

THE WORD WAR SEEMS HEADED FOR the movies.

Actress Nadia Montenegro told Inquirer on Wednesday she was talking to her lawyers about possibly filing libel charges against TV host Cristy Fermin and the ABS-CBN program "The Buzz."

In the show's Oct. 5 episode, Fermin said Montenegro had given birth three years ago to a baby girl whose father was not the actress' long-time partner, former Caloocan City mayor Eliseo "Boy" Asistio.

On Tuesday, Montenegro filed a complaint before the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board against Fermin on account of the "malicious and slanderous" remarks.

In her complaint, Montenegro sought Fermin's suspension from the show, plus penalties for what she termed were violations of running broadcast rules. "We don't need to be a lawyer or even a college graduate to figure out what rules were violated here," Montenegro insisted.

Gathering evidence

On Wednesday afternoon, censors chief Nielsen Lagumbay said the board called for a meeting next week with the producers of "The Buzz" and three other board members.

But as we went to press, ABS-CBN announced that Fermin had been suspended until the end of the year from "The Buzz" and her daily radio show.

Meanwhile, Montenegro said, she has decided her lawyer, Agnes Mercado, to gather evidence against Fermin. "It's time she learned her lesson," said the former actress. "Me, I'm ready for anything. At marami na akong naiwang artista (she has abandoned many movie stars)."

Montenegro said Fermin had offended to her adopted daughter Anita. With Asistio, Montenegro added, the four-year-old daughter seemed shaken.

Friends have been urging her to just sit down with the TV host and discuss the problem, she said, "Pero bakit pa (What for)?"

Should Montenegro proceed with the lawsuit, it wouldn't be Fermin's first. In April, the Supreme Court ordered the TV host—then a tabloid movie columnist and former movie **reporter publishes**—to pay P1 million in damages and P5,000 in fines to couple Eddie Gutierrez and Anabelle Rama in connection with the libel conviction handed out by the Quezon City Regional Trial Court and the Court of Appeals. The case was filed in 1995. The fine hails out Fermin from the prescribed jail sentence of three months to one year, eight months and 21 days.

"I am not backing down from this fight," Montenegro said. "My kids are in school. They and I are still okay. I'm doing fine for them."

E-mail: marinel@inquirer.com.ph

CINEMA ACCESS: 635-5555

MOVIEWORLD

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www.robinsonsmovieworld.com

GALLERIA

1 MAX PAYNE
2 MAX PAYNE
3 THE STRANGERS
4 TROPIC THUNDER
5 BODY OF LIES
6 APPALOOSA
7 MAG-INGAT KA SA KULAM
8 BANGIS II
9 MIRRORS / BURIED ALIVE
10 EAGLE EYE

ERMITA

1 TROPIC THUNDER
2 THE STRANGERS
3 MAX PAYNE
4 BODY OF LIES
5 APPALOOSA
6 RESERVED
7 RESERVED
8 BURIED ALIVE / EAGLE EYE
9 MAG-INGAT KA SA KULAM

METRO EAST

1 BURIED ALIVE
2 BODY OF LIES
3 MAX PAYNE
4 MIRRORS
5 TROPIC THUNDER
6 APPALOOSA
7 EAGLE EYE
8 MAG-INGAT KA SA KULAM

NOVALICHES

1 MAX PAYNE
2 BODY OF LIES
3 MAG-INGAT KA SA KULAM
4 MIRRORS

PIONEER

1 THE STRANGERS
2 MAX PAYNE
3 APPALOOSA
4 BODY OF LIES

STA. ROSA

1 MAX PAYNE
2 BODY OF LIES
3 EAGLE EYE
4 MAG-INGAT KA SA KULAM

LIPA

1 MIRRORS
2 MAG-INGAT KA SA KULAM
3 MY BEST FRIEND'S GIRL
4 DISASTER MOVIE

DASMARINAS

1 BODY OF LIES
2 THREE KINGDOMS
3 MAG-INGAT KA SA KULAM
4 MAX PAYNE

IMUS

1 MAG-INGAT KA SA KULAM
2 BODY OF LIES
3 EAGLE EYE
4 MAX PAYNE

ANGELES

1 MAX PAYNE
2 IGOR
3 MUTANT CHRONICLES
4 EAGLE EYE

STARMILLS

1 MAX PAYNE
2 MAG-INGAT KA SA KULAM
3 EAGLE EYE
4 MAKE IT HAPPEN
5 MUTANT CHRONICLES
6 IGOR

BACOLOD

1 MAX PAYNE
2 MUTANT CHRONICLES
3 THREE KINGDOMS
4 MAKE IT HAPPEN
5 MY BEST FRIEND'S GIRL
6 MAG-INGAT KA SA KULAM

ILOILO

1 MAX PAYNE
2 MAG-INGAT KA SA KULAM
3 168 FEET
4 BODY OF LIES
5 MY BEST FRIEND'S GIRL
6 MIRRORS

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ALL MAJOR CREDIT CARDS NOW ACCEPTED IN ALL SM CINEMA BRANCHES

Vanessa Hudgens can't wait to visit RP

From page 1

You just bought a big house. How exciting is that for you?

It'd be a lie more exciting if not everyone knew (laughter). I'm really happy, don't get me wrong. I'm really excited to set my own personal routines, have my own food in my kitchen and have my own space. But now everyone knows where I live.

Not every 19-year-old gets to buy his own house. How disciplined are you with your life?

I am growing up. It's really important for a young woman to study her independence. Owning a home is a good investment. I want to be able to take care of myself. Growing up, especially in Hollywood, can be tough because everyone's looking at you. I want to know myself by being by myself.

How good are you at managing your money?

I have a business manager who helps me to draw a paper but I make sure I am smart with my money because while, my money became who knows what will happen. I think I'm a smart spender.

You have a very supportive mom in the film. How supportive are your own parents?

My mom and dad didn't really want me to be in the business because there's a lot of competition and rejection, but they're extremely supportive. It's weren't for them, I wouldn't be where I am. They're always let me do what I wanted to — acting, singing and dancing. They have been there with me every step of the way.

You mentioned that you were home-schooled. Who was your teacher?

My mom. Yeah, she was there, teaching me at home. It wasn't that exciting (laughter).

Filipinos tweem like to have their children in their fold for as long as they can, How is your mom taking the fact that you're on your own now?

My mom just went over and checked my fridge with food so I'm fine in that department. My parents live only a few miles away. I am going to miss them but they're extremely supportive. They know this is something that I want. My dad makes sure my home is secure. I know it's hard for them but they're where it quite well.

Are you unsure that 4GH is very popular in the Philippines?

I hear that it's popular in those places but I don't really know it. Once I get there, I'll get back to you (laughter).

(To be continued tomorrow)

E-mail the columnist at <mipalm_2002@yahoo.com> and read his blog "The Napalm Report," on <http://blogs.inquirer.net/napalmreport>

AT THE CINEMAS

GLORIETTA 1	1 BODY OF LIES	2 MAX PAYNE	3 THE STRANGERS	4 KULAM			
GLORIETTA 4	1 TROPIC THUNDER	2 EAGLE EYE	3 BODY OF LIES				
	4 PINEAPPLE EXPRESS	5 APPALOOSA	6 MAX PAYNE	7 THE STRANGERS			
GREENBELT 1	1 BODY OF LIES	2 MAX PAYNE					
GREENBELT 3	1 BODY OF LIES	2 MAX PAYNE					
	3 PINEAPPLE EXPRESS	4 THE STRANGERS	5 TROPIC THUNDER				
ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 MAX PAYNE	2 THE STRANGERS					
	3 BODY OF LIES	4 APPALOOSA	5 TROPIC THUNDER				
AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 MAX PAYNE	2 BODY OF LIES	3 THREE KINGDOMS	4 GRAVEDANCERS			
MARKET! MARKET!	1 MAX PAYNE	2 THE STRANGERS					
	3 TROPIC THUNDER	4 BODY OF LIES	5 KULAM				
TRINOMA	1 KULAM	2 EAGLE EYE	3 THE STRANGERS	4 APPALOOSA			
	5 TROPIC THUNDER	6 BODY OF LIES	7 MAX PAYNE				

AT THE MALLS

Ayala Malls

Glorietta — PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER JOB FAIR — October 16-21, Glorietta Activity Center

Greenbelt — SHOPPING SPREE AT GREENBELT 1 — Win exciting prizes and a P50,000 SOG for every P500 worth of purchases at any Greenbelt 1 establishment. August 15-October 19

Alabang Town Center — SOUTHERN CUISINE AT THE TOWN — October 17, 18 & 19, 6:00pm, Home Zone

Ayala Center Cebu — THEM PINK MEMORABILIA EXHIBIT — October 15 to 31, Press Annex

Market! Market! — MEGAGATE SHOWBIZ — October 18, Activity Center

Christ Gate — Repository Philippines presents Jeremy's Wish at — August 8 to November 16, 2008 — For details, call 8478181 loc 113 or log on to www.repository.philippines.com

Ayala Museum — I DO WHAT? — Ongoing until 31 November 2008 at the Lobby Floor — For details, call Emma at 757-7117 loc 21 or email dir_ayalamuseum.org

Tri Noma — MTV VJ SEARCH FINALE NIGHT — October 23, Activity Center — SALUD! Wine Mixologists Workshop — October 23, 4:00pm, 3rd Level Exhibit Area (near PowerMac)

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ENTERTAINMENT OCTOBER 17, 2008

Vanessa Hudgens can't wait to visit RP

LOS ANGELES—FILIPINO-AMERICAN ACtress Anna Maria Perez de Tagle, granddaughter of hybrida La Storia, bagged a starring role in "Bratz," which is described as a "reinvention" of the original FBC/Mattel doll opinionated hit TV and feature shows.

According to IMDB, Anna, whose credits include "Hannah Montana" and "Camp Rock," will play "the progenitors Jay Sing a unique, angsted-up talent with a big heart and a lot to say."

* * *

"Bratz" are grossed Vanessa Hudgens when she walked into a hotel meeting room for our latest interview with her last Sunday "Hubert," announced the Filipino-American actress, who was gorgeous in a long-sleeved red blouse and slim jeans.

In "High School Musical 3: Senior Year," Vanessa, Zac Efron and the rest of the gang are back on East High School Ave., this time they are hoping into the big screen. The musical numbers, the top closer to the first run-to-millionaire of "HSM," are bigger and the choreography created by Fil-Am Charles "Charlie" Glapese, Bonnie Story and Kenny Ortega (who also directed), is lively and inspired.

In their jump from TV to the giant multiplexes, the main cast is free as appealing. Kenny and his minions made every good decision when they cast Vanessa, Zac, Ashley Tisdale, Lucas Grabeel, Corbin Bleu and Monique Coleman in the first HSM. Even the new members of the cast, including Matt Prokop, are welcome additions.

After the interview, Vanessa graciously offered for us to finally meet her mother, Gina Guangco, who is from southern Philippines. Gina, very smiling and charming like Vanessa, came in the room with her oldest daughter Stella, 12, who is also an actress. The Hudgens girls' love for singing was sparked in part by the karaoke, a must-have feature in most Filipino households.

The Los Angeles Times recently reported that Vanessa, 19, just bought a house worth $2.75 million. The singer-actress told us that her excitement about being a first-time homeowner was tempered by the fact that LA Times declared the city where her home is, with accompanying photos.

"Vanessa is still going out with Zac, who told us in a separate interview that his dad's best friend is a Filipino, "a major or an officer of an island or something." So the older Efron, Daniel, has been to the Philippines "maybe four or five times in the past six years." Zac added, "I really should visit the Philippines. Believe me, I've tried several times." But apparently Zac's busy schedule has always prevented him from seeing the Philippines for the first time.

Our press group's photographers, who have snapped Hollywood's most beautiful actresses, were crazy taking photos of Vanessa in the balcony of a hotel room. That's how attractive Vanessa looked last Sunday afternoon.

Excerpts from our interview:

What are you looking forward to when you finally get to visit the Philippines?

I had an offer to actually go to the Philippines and do a show there, which unfortunately didn't materialize. Hopefully I will be able to do that sometime in the near future. My mom still hasn't been back and it would just be nice to take her along, explore Isang Bansa and see the world she grew up in. I can't wait to go.

Which singer or songs when you were very young do you still remember?

If it weren't for Celine Dion, I wouldn't be singing. I actually stole my parents' CD of Celine Dion's "The Power of Love" when I was about 7. I took out the flip book and sang every single song, every single day. I remember singing "The Power of Love" and there was this one high note that I never in a million years could hit. Growing up, I loved Christina Aguilera. She has the most amazing voice. It's incredible what she can do, when comes out of her little body. And Michael Jackson has always been an inspiration. I was lucky enough to meet him. I grew up singing a lot of karaoke tunes. Laughter). My parents brought me a karaoke machine and I got a whole bunch of the old classics.

I used to sing Patsy Cline (laughter) and songs from musicals as well. I always loved musicals and I've been in so many as well.

VANESSA 21

ONLY IN HOLLYWOOD

Ryben V. Nepales

...Anna Maria Perez de Tagle is in 'Fame' remake

LIVING Stars

HOME BODY

SUNDAYS WITH MOM

CHIQUI Roa-Puno (R) her husband and their three kids have Sunday dinners with mom Boots in the QC house that is filled with memories. Photo by Ed

MARC ABAYA

MY FAVORITE BOOK IS "I SEE WAVES (Smith Bunn, Walk of Destinations: A Novel of the Old Republic" by Drew Karpyshyn. I'm a big "Star Wars" fan. After seeing Darth Maul in "Episode One," I became obsessed with Sith culture. This book, which I've read three times on the eve of "Tagum na Pakitan" and "Hanging this on Laugh") is a parasite fiddle for me. I've ever seen, enjoyed some films. "Peace is a lie. There is only passion. Through passion, I gain strength. Through strength, I gain power. Through power, I gain victory. Through victory, my chains are broken." It sounds cool. This guy makes me feel like an angel. I don't want to be him, but I want to know more about him.

Reported Sam Rhiger Jr.

MIKI HAHN

THE BOOK I'D CALLED "GOTHIC ANGELOU" (by Masayuki Wakinaga and Kazuhiro Ishikawa). This is actually the term used by the Japanese to describe a subculture of teenagers who wear a wide range of clothing styles. It's not heavy reading; it's full of pictures and is all about fashion in Japan that many find weird. I'm taking up fashion design in school and I got inspiration from this book.

Marisol R. Cruz

FRED PAYAWAN

BOOKS

I BOUGHT THIS BOOK, FRANKLIN Covey's "Steven Habits of Highly Effective Teens," when I was in first year high school, with the aim of being motivated at being. I read this and how! I became part of pilot class on my second year. It changed my outlook in life, I learned how to prioritize. It made me appreciate reading.

Marisol R. Cruz

LOVI POE

I LOVE ROMANCE NOVELS BY JUDITH MCNAUGHT. IT'S BECAUSE I'm such a hopeless romantic. My all-time favorite is "Paradise." Now I'm reading "Almost Heaven," (how I wish they turn her books into movies. When I'm on the set, between takes, I read her books. Some of the songs I've written were inspired by her stories. When I have to do dramatic scenes, I also try to recall passages in her novels. I enjoy reading because it enriches your imagination, which is important in my line of work—especially now that I am working on my second album with Sony BMG.

Reported Sam Rhiger Jr.

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SUN CELLULAR

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'Fifth and Wisdom' NY screening, Oct. 13

Whether they were or not, they've broken up

ANNE CURTIS IS SAID TO have admitted during a product shoot that she and boyfriend **Sam Milby** have broken up over a new Star Magic talent, Michaela Mileniu.

For a while, there seemed to be an attempt to push pod- the decision by framing raced than Sam and Anne really weren't ... you know. So confusing. Long live showbiz!

Celebrity Bee

Some bee enamored by ex-GMA 7's "Celebrity Game," Melanie Marquez buzzes over to "The Singing Bee," now re-airing on ABS-CBN. Tomorrow, 7 p.m., Melanie competes with Cherry Pie Picache, Marilyn Reynes, Jonas Garcia, Enchong Dee and Rafael Rosell. On Sunday, the celebrity contestants are Gigi Dueñas, Jayson Gainza, DJ Durano, Kaye Abad, Giselle Sanchez, and Dan Reynaldo.

'Mother' in Chinatown

Just opened in Chinatown, the 16th Shirley Reyes salon... and of course "Mother" was in tact at the inauguration throwing the celebrity guests were singers Jose Mari and Gian Magdangal, who very ably played Bill in Reyes' recent productions of "Fun Girls Story."

For those who didn't see Will, the good news is, there's a plan to re-stage it next year.

Stars read Pinoy

Theme of the 12th Philippine Book Development Month (November), spearheaded by the National Book Development Board, is "Read Pinoy!" Stars are heeding the call, happily. Posters and newspaper ads show Miriam Quiambao reading the novel anthology "The Manila We Know"; Eula Manotoc, the poetry collection "Letter to Mom"; Nikki Gil, "Happy Endings"; Lani Joaquin Leighdel's collection of short stories; Mel Tiotuico, the novel about comic book "Strong"; Bencadek and Marlene Simmons, "One Hundred Love Stories Philippine Love Poetry Since 1900." Whew!

Condolences

Japanese Manager Inomata, mother of singer-comedian Kazumi Inomata, passed away on Sunday morning due to complications arising from a heart ailment.

Inomata, 79, was confined at the National Kidney Institute at the time of her death. She is survived by six of her Immaculate Medicolist Church in Quezon Ave., Quezon City. Interment will be held tomorrow at the Holy Cross Memorial Park in Novaliches, Quezon City.

'Hairspray' face-off

Power singer Dulce (aside for Xth year in the biz by taking on the role of Motor Mouth Maybelle in Atlanta Productions' "Hairspray," which runs from 1st to Dec. 7 in Star Theater. The role was played onscreen by Queen Latifah.

Meanwhile Lauthengco-Pahk, who delivered Dreamgirls' Effie, returns to acting as the villainous Velma Von Tussle, played in the movie by Michelle Pfeiffer.

Nancy Wasson portrays Seaweed J. Stubbs; Leo Rialp, Wilbur Turnblad; and

Doing a John Travolta and playing a woman is ... Michael de Mesa! Gabe Mercado plays roustabout roles as Male Authority Figure, Enchong Dee is his equivalent Female Authority Figure Plus, Noel Rayos returns from Hong Kong Disney to play Corny Collins.

Bobby Garcia, fresh from "Cinderella," directs. After Will, seems like one to the stage production is

'Younger Dejardins dies

PARIS—French film star Gerard Depardieu's son Guillaume, a 37 year-old actor who rubbed against his father and led an eight-ridden, tumultuous life, has died of pneumonia, his father's agency said Monday. The young actor was the French version of the Disney a Cesar, for Best New Male Talent in 1996 for his role in Pierre Salvadori's black comedy "Les Apprentis." Reuters

Buckingham 'palace' looted

LONDON—Two staff working at the English mansion belonging to Daniel Beckham and his wife Victoria have been arrested on suspicion of stealing memorabilia belonging the movie star. Newspapers said possessions of the Los Angeles Galaxy player and his "Posh Spice" wife were allegedly taken from their home, dubbed "Beckingham Palace," in Sawbridgeworth, Hertfordshire, about 30 miles northeast of London. Reuters

'Please please me'

LOS ANGELES—Please please me ... with no more mail, former Beatles drummer Ringo Starr has told fans to stop sending letters and requests for autographs. Ringo, 67, said he thrives on many after Oct. 20 because he has too much to do. Starr, 68, made the announcement in a video message titled "Sorry So Most Signing Stuff" posted on his official website www.ringostarr.com.

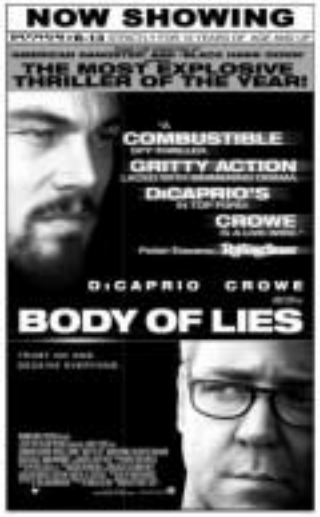
Wearing sunglasses and flashing a peace sign, he says: "I'm starting my 68th year and love. This is a serious message." Reuters

Not a fan

Mark Paddleng is not a fan of a "Saturday Night Live" sketch from October 4th called "Mark Paddleng Talks To Animals." In Sunday's NY Post, Paddleng has a Q&A to promote his upcoming movie "Miss Pryne," and towards the end is asked what he thought. In the skit, Andy Samberg plays Paddleng trying to "talk" to a dog, a goat, a chicken and a donkey. It's described on NBC's website as "Barky Bush and the Donkey Bunch." Sample dialogue, "Hey dog, what's up? I like your fur ... say, hey is your mother for me?"

Paddleng said of the sketch:

"I'm not even dressed up in my own wardrobe. It wasn't like Tina Fey doing Sarah Palin, that's for sure. And 'Saturday Night Live' hasn't been funny for a long time. They've asked me to do the show a ton of times. I used to watch it when Eddie Murphy was there and Chris Rock ... I'm not a SNL Master. I don't even know who's on the show now."



FORMER Beatle Ringo Starr (R) flashes peace signs as he and wife Barbara Bach arrive in downtown Chicago, Illinois in July to celebrate his 68th birthday

Presley names newborn twin girls Finley and Harper

NEW YORK—LISA MARIE PRESLEY has named her newborn twin daughters Finley and Harper, Cindy Gaspard, a publicist for the 40-year-old singer, confirmed the names Tuesday, a week after Presley, who lives in the Los Angeles area, gave birth by Caesarean section. Presley is the daughter of Elvis Presley and is married to music producer Michael Lockwood. She has a 19-year-old daughter, Riley, and a 13-year-old son, Benjamin, from her marriage to musician Danny Keough, which ended in 1994. She was briefly married to Michael Jackson and to Nicolas Cage. She married Lockwood in January 2006.

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M (left) Jan Nieto, Marlo's Garcia, Gian Magdangal, Ruby Reyes

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MICHAEL de Mesa (top right) will reprise John Travolta's (top left) screen role in "Hairspray." Dulce (left) will recite Queen Latifah's (above) Motormouth Maybelle.

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ARIA SABRINA AGBAYANI

ACCORDING TO COMEDIAN IVAN AGBAYANI, ... ful of four girls: "Maria Sabri... ... still nine 1 on Oct. 27. I ... don't know what the theme of ... party will be yet, but the ... the sound will be pink and ... She currently wakes up ... 3 a.m. I get up when she's ... mom: ET dapat si 2 a.m. We ... work around the schedules. ... 's a really cute girl. Hahahaggh! ... Ang cute nga ... Agbayani. (Maria's other daughters are ... Isabella Maria, 11, Maria Thalia, 8, and Mara ... 6.) Marinel R. Cruz

STAR BABY

OPENS OCTOBER 22
FIRST THE PAIN ... THEN THE CONVULSION AND YOU'RE NOT HUMAN ANYMORE
There's no escape from the evil within
LIVING HELL

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BOOTS poses by an inspirational artwork on Pete displayed in the newly renovated office.

DINING area features gifts from family, as well as ceramic and silverware collections.

Home alone

HOME BODY

Boots Anson-Roa has renovated the house she shared with Pete

COLORFUL Buddha from Jo-Lizo's store is a 100-year-old lamp from mother-in-law Sentina Roa.

By Bayani San Diego Jr.
Photos by Rudy Esperas

IT'S BEEN OVER A YEAR since the passing of her husband Pete, but actress Boots Anson-Roa admits she still ends up with tear-drenched pillows at times. Her two-storey home in Quezon City is filled with memories of the last six years of his life.

"We looked at 50 houses in 2002," Boots recalls. "This one, which wasn't even on the list, met all our requirements—mainly, that the stairs are not too steep and it is near hospitals."

At the time, Boots was caring for two patients—her dad, actor Oscar Moreno (who passed on in 2003) and Pete, who had just survived a stroke.

She has completely renovated the place now, collaborating with interior Vicky Arenas-Ochoa.

The previous owners had very expensive tastes, Boots noted. She replaced the ornate crystal chandelier in the living room with a simple German-made lamp. What she had the wall re-wall carpeting in the bedroom taken out, the happily discovered parts flooring underneath.

She filled the place with memories from family and friends. In a sitting nook, the huge "Rosario shrine" is from her father; the 100-year-old chair under it, from Pete's mother Andrea Nel-Roa. In the dining area, the golden Buddha is from her friend, Mabel Crisólogo Amora, a chemistry professor.

Aunt Vicing de Asis of the antique store Jo-Lizo's gifted her with another Buddha image and a pair of Venetian mirrors.

There are also unique souvenirs from numerous trips abroad, like framed prints from The Louvre, a Buddha head from Thailand and lamps and flower vases from the Middle East.

A wooden carving of the Santo Niño hanging by the staircase was made from the wood of a statue, Boots says, adding that all of the statues in the altar are gifts from friends.

Paintings by Mario Monje, Pete's colleague in Channel 5 in the 1960s, occupy spaces of honor in the staircase and bedroom. "Grown often reminds Mario's work for us till Ocampo ... because Mario was (life) protégé," Boots says. "When we lived in Washington DC, an art gallery owner offered to buy Mario's Crucifixion' painting."

Of course, Boots refused to part with it. The piece now hangs in the memorable, Pete's favorite nook and smoking area.

With both Oscar and Pete gone, Boots is experiencing empty nest syndrome, especially since the house, with a total floor area of 500 square meters, is simply too big for her.

"My four children keep telling me to downsize. Maybe, they're right. I'll probably move to a condo unit near mine, though I'm not in a hurry."

Meanwhile, she is burying herself with myriad tasks, apart from hosting the ArMMA/Teleradyo Sunday afternoon show "Music and Memories" and, reportedly, shooting GMA's Time Your Love," she also teaches Broadcast Management and Film Production at the Ateneo and UP Diliman.

The teacher has also gone back to school, taking computer classes at the Ateneo, under the Asian Communications Foundation. Boots explains, "It's a course designed to teach NGO heads how to harness the computer and the Internet for their chosen advocacies." She finds it a big help in her job as executive director of the Maria Walang Hihihiwalay Foundation, Inc.

She is occupied, 24/7. "But I still think of Pete [a lot]," she says. And yes, sometimes, it feels like being home alone. "Sometimes I feel lonely, though not altogether lonely."

Son Joey has taken over the old office, which was repainted and renovated into his bedroom. Between hosting shows on ANC, daughter Chiqui often drops by.

"Chiqui and her family live nearby. Simon [Ibarra, her husband] (Rep. Isidro Ponce), three more children and I have dinner here," Boots says.

When does she plan to do with all the souvenirs, if and when she moves to a smaller place? She replies, with utmost certainty, "I will bring all the important pieces with me."

(E-mail: bayani.sandiego@gmail.com)

SCREEN Buddha is from Jo-Lizo's store. Chinese Aunt Vicing de Asis gifted her with the mirrors.

EROTIC statue from the Middle East is a painting from manager Bing Carballo.

CHEERY kitchen in yellow and green

MEZZANINE, which showcases Mamer paintings and blue-and-whites, was Pete's favorite nook.

FOYER displays souvenirs from Louvre and other travels.

POCKET garden is a refuge Boots relishes the papers in the morning.

VESTIBULE mirrors from aunt Vicing de Asis frame the stylish washroom.

"SLEEPING Sto. Niño" is a gift from painter Sol Santos, an exponent of Banig Iloilo, says Boots.

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